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MEDIA ACCESS TO MILITARY OPERATIONS: AN EVALUATION  
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JOINT PUBLIC AFFAIRS OPERATIONS"

by

LeWONNIE EVETT BELCHER

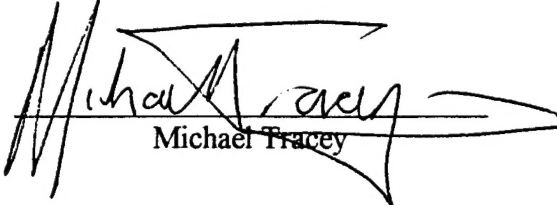
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The final copy of this thesis has been examined by the signators, and we find that both the content and the form meet acceptable presentation standards of scholarly work in the above mentioned discipline.

Belcher, LeWonnice E. (M.A., Journalism)

Media Access to Military Operations: An Evaluation of the New DoD Instruction,  
“Procedures for Joint Public Affairs Operations”

Thesis directed by Professor Michael Tracey

This study is a qualitative examination of media access to military operations in light of the new Department of Defense Instruction 5400.14.4, “Procedures for Joint Public Affairs Operations.” Based on a review of literature on media access to military operations, an examination of current policies and procedures, as well as a comparative analysis of views presented by media and military representatives, the researcher assesses the efficacy of the new DoD Instruction.

The researcher concludes that while the new Instruction is a vast improvement on previous policies that prohibited or severely restricted media access to military operations, there are areas it neglects to address in an adequate manner. These oversights may lead to a recurrence of tensions between the media and the military that existed prior to the implementation of the new Instruction.

Media and military members should be apprised of the key concepts of the new DoD Instruction to ensure negation of tensions in the media-military relationship. Members of those institutions should engage in a continuing, proactive dialogue to address future concerns and enhance understanding of each other’s requirements and limitations. The military and media should agree on mutually acceptable numerical

limitations to future military operations. The DoD should consider using a centralized funding source for equipping joint information bureaus.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### **Background on the Issue**

Ever since Carl Von Clausewitz wrote his great tome, "On War," in 1832, public opinion has been seen as a critical factor in the act of engaging war. It's a factor all military strategists recognize as inseparable from the goals of winning any major conflict. And with the increase in technological sophistication over the years, the role of the media in shoring up or eroding public opinion in support of war efforts has been a topic of concern and controversy. As Marvin Kalb stated in the editorial "A View from the Press," an evaluation of press coverage during the Persian Gulf War:

Up until the discovery of the telegraph in 1843, the military could safely accommodate journalists, even on the battlefield because press dispatches were so slow getting into print that there was little chance of providing comfort to the enemy or embarrassment to the general -- or the politicians in Washington. However, once the telegraph in the mid-19th century and television in the late-20th century accelerated the process of reporting, the generals could no longer be indifferent to the power of the press to influence public opinion.<sup>1</sup>

The coverage of the Vietnam War, in particular, is seen as a watershed event in terms of military-media relations as it was considered the first *television war*. Media

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<sup>1</sup> Marvin Kalb, "A View from the Press," Taken By Storm. The Media, Public Opinion and U.S. Foreign Policy in the Gulf War, eds W.L. Bennett and D.L. Paletz (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994) 3.

coverage, especially by television, was seen, although naively, by many in uniform as the catalyst for the public's dissatisfaction for the United States' involvement in and, consequently, for its less than honorable withdrawal from the region. This myth took on the face of reality for many of those in uniform who still hold tightly to this belief.

One of the more popularly-held beliefs is that by reporting the nightly killed-in-action counts, the media were responsible for turning public opinion by "fueling antiwar sentiment that eventually led to the American pullout."<sup>1</sup> It was a belief widely adopted by military leaders like the late General Lewis Walt who argued that "newspaper columnists had succeeded in 'propagandizing' and 'dividing the public.'<sup>2</sup> Generals William Westmoreland and Maxwell Taylor believed that "television carried a gory and distorted picture of the war into American living rooms and scared the public."<sup>3</sup>

And this popular view (at least within the military) about the media's effect on public opinion during the Vietnam War was soon adopted by other members of the American society, as indicated by Eugene Hickok, an associate professor of political science at Dickinson College in Pennsylvania. Hickok said the media played a significant role in the disillusionment of the public toward the war. The professor relayed a joke about the influence of the media on public opinion: If the media had

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<sup>1</sup> Bob Levin, "The Demons of Vietnam: The War May Exact a High Price." Maclean's, (February 1991).

<sup>2</sup> Carol Innerst, "War in the Gulf: The Military vs. the Press," The Washington Times, (January 25, 1991) B3.

<sup>3</sup> Innerst, B3.

covered the Civil War, "we'd be two nations now. If we had seen TV coverage of Gettysburg, we'd have backed down."<sup>1</sup>

However, as John E. Mueller, professor of political science at the University of Rochester and author of "War, Presidents and Public Opinion," noted, "Anything that gets repeated enough, people start believing."<sup>2</sup> Mueller and historian William Hammond believe the source of public dissatisfaction with the war lies not with the media, but with the government's failure to "prosecute the war more vigorously."<sup>3</sup> Hammond was quoted by *Maclean's* Bob Levin as saying, "What alienated the American public in... Vietnam... was not news coverage, but casualties. In fact, the American public was generally supportive of the war until 1967."<sup>4</sup>

Mueller concurred with that assessment in his 1973 book, "War, Presidents, and Public Opinion":

Many have seen Vietnam as a 'television war' and argue that the vivid and largely uncensored day-by-day television coverage of the war and its brutalities made a profound impression on public attitudes... the poll data do not support such a conclusion. They clearly show that whatever impact television had, it was not enough to reduce support for the war below the levels attained by the Korean War, when television was in its infancy, until casualty levels had far surpassed those of the earlier war.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Innerst, B3.

<sup>2</sup> Innerst B3.

<sup>3</sup> Levin.

<sup>4</sup> P. Richter, "Support for War Seen Despite Baghdad Deaths; Public Opinion: Heavy Civilian Casualties in Earlier Wars Saddened Americans But Did Not Greatly Change Their Views of Conflicts." *Los Angeles Times*. (February 15, 1991) 5.

<sup>5</sup> John E. Mueller, *War, Presidents, and Public Opinion*. (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1973) 167.

Mueller stated that studies showed media coverage of several atrocities, including CBS reports that troops used cigarette lighters to set fire to Vietnam villages, failed to sway public opinion.<sup>1</sup>

Following the Vietnam War, the military and the media took divergent paths to regain the trust of the American public. The military, convinced that its efforts in Southeast Asia had been hindered by media coverage of the war, reflected, discussed and planned how to handle the media. According to Everette E. Dennis, in a report by Columbia University's Gannett Foundation Media Center, the military had a determination to "be ready for the next war not only on strictly military terms, but also in terms of public opinions."<sup>2</sup>

While the military developed public relations and communications strategy training programs for public affairs officers, and restricted media access to battlefields in future wars -- a policy favored by the American public who, over time, became convinced of the media's culpability in Vietnam -- the media gave little thought to the subject of how future wars should be covered (a pattern of nonreflection, this author believes, continues to occur today).<sup>3</sup> Instead, some critics argue that the media engaged in news practices designed to court audiences and advertisers and assuage government officials.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Richter, 5.

<sup>2</sup> The Media At War: The Press and the Gulf Conflict, eds C. LeMay, M. Fitzsimon and J. Sahadi, (New York: Columbia University, Gannett Foundation Media Center, 1991) 1.

<sup>3</sup> LeMay, Fitzsimon and Sahadi, 1.

<sup>4</sup> Kalb, 4.

Therefore, the media, intent on winning back public support, barely protested the restrictive ground rules which barred them from the battlefield during the 1983 Grenada Conflict. Nor, did they use foresight to anticipate how this new policy -- with the addition of the use of press pools in Panama in 1989 -- would affect them in their efforts to cover future wars.

So, by the time the Gulf War became a blip on the monitor of the American consciousness, the media had already ensconced themselves in a pattern of deference (to government officials) in a quest to woo the American public and advertisers at the expense of real news reporting. The media abdicated their most important role during times of war, "the ability to think critically, act in a detached manner, ask questions...."<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, when General Colin Powell, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told the media to "trust me" during the Gulf War, they did and "were then subjected to the most sophisticated message in the history of Pentagon salesmanship."<sup>2</sup> This salesmanship was able to take place because the media were held hostage to the military through an unprecedented amount control placed on them in terms of censorship and access restrictions. Although the media were not entirely excluded from this operation as they had been in Grenada and Panama, they were subjected to a severely restrictive set of guidelines which involved press pools, military escorts and security review. The military controlled what the media could see, with whom they

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<sup>1</sup> Kalb. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Kalb. 4.

could talk, and what they could report.<sup>1</sup> The military, indeed, lived up to its promise that this conflict would not be *another* Vietnam. Unfortunately for the media, they were too slow in realizing the impact this would have on their attempts to gain access to troops and combat areas.

Soon after the conflict in the Persian Gulf ended, members of the media banded together to protest the restrictions placed on them during the war, and attempted to define and negotiate rules governing coverage of future military operations.<sup>2</sup> On April 15, 1991, a working group of 15 Washington bureau chiefs, met to discuss media coverage ground rules. They feared the type of control exercised over them during the Gulf War would become the model for coverage of future conflicts.

The group appointed a working group consisting of media representatives from the *Washington Post*, ABC News, CBS News, Knight-Ridder Newspapers, and *Time*. The group issued a report that, essentially, stated that contrary to Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs Pete Williams' assertion that "the press gave the American people the best war coverage they ever had,"<sup>3</sup> "the combination of security review and the use of the pool system as a form of censorship made the Gulf War the

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<sup>1</sup> Michael D. Steger. "Slicing the Gordian Knot: A Proposal to Reform Military Regulation of Media Coverage of Combat Operations," University of San Francisco School of Law Review. (Summer 1994) 972.

<sup>2</sup> Pascale Combelles-Siegel. "The Troubled Path to the Pentagon's Rules on Media Access to the Battlefield: Grenada to Today," (U.S Army War College Strategic Studies Institute: Carlisle Barracks, Penn., May 15, 1996) 8.

<sup>3</sup> Hedrick Smith, ed., The Media and the Gulf War. (Washington, D.C.: Seven Locks, 1992) 378.

most undercovered major conflict in modern American history. In a free society, there is simply no place for such overwhelming control by the government.”<sup>1</sup>

The group forwarded their findings to Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney and demanded a meeting to discuss the Gulf War policy failures. Members of the media and representatives of the Department of Defense spent the next eight months meeting and negotiating a new agreement. On May 21, 1992, the DoD announced it had adopted new combat coverage principles, which in part state that “open and independent coverage,” not pools, shall be the primary goal when granting media access to military operations. In order to avoid future problems of the nature that occurred in the Gulf, Williams felt that it was necessary to transform the guidelines into official DoD doctrine, and a joint public affairs directive.<sup>2</sup> Four years, after its inception, the DoD Instruction 5400.14.4.4, “Procedures for Joint Public Affairs Operations,” was published on January 22, 1996. The DoD doctrine is still in draft form.

### **Purpose of Study**

The free and independent media in the United States perform two critical functions in wartime, according to U.S. Army Captain James B. Brown. First, the media is supposed to “inform the public on what policies its government is pursuing

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<sup>1</sup> Combelles-Siegel, 18.

<sup>2</sup> Combelles-Siegel, 19.

and how those policies are being executed.” Secondly, the media are supposed to be “present to independently record for history what happened.”<sup>1</sup>

The purpose of this study is to assess the new DoD Instruction to determine if it does allow the media to perform their job in the manner described by Brown while covering military operations. The author will determine if the new policy will, for all practical purposes, resolve many of the issues that came to a boiling point during the Gulf War. Additionally, the author will attempt to determine if the DoD Instruction has proven to alleviate some of the historical tensions between the press and the military, especially in light of recent military operations in Somalia, Haiti and Bosnia. Also, it is the author’s intent to determine the level of clarity of the policy as determined by a qualitative assessment of the media and the military’s interpretation of the guidelines set out in the Instruction. Finally, the author will try to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the new policy and make recommendations which will further enhance military-media relations, at least on the subject of military access to operations whether combat, humanitarian, or peacekeeping.

### **Research Questions**

With the 1992 agreement on news media coverage and the new DoD Instruction, which provides the most definitive set of guidelines on media access to military operations, significant strides have been made in terms of media cooperation and military-media relations. For example, the 1992 agreement marked the first time members of the media worked “together to defend what they view as their collective

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<sup>1</sup> Captain James B. Brown. USA, “Media Access to the Battlefield,” Military Review, (July 1992), 10.

rights and presented a set of standards that many believe should govern coverage of U.S. military operations.”<sup>1</sup>

Also, the agreement and the new DoD Instruction now mean that:

Both parties have at their disposal a tool to judge and measure the other's actions: its commitment to the rules agreed upon or its failure to abide by them. For the first time, finally, the military-media controversy has led to a comprehensive policy on media access to the battlefield.<sup>2</sup>

The author intends to assess the efficacy of this new DoD Instruction by determining the clarity of the document. The new policy states that “open and independent coverage” is the primary goal while granting media access to military operations.” Do media and military members share the same understanding of such key terms? How does the DoD's retention of provisions for the use of pools affect the idea of open and independent coverage? Next, the new policy states that security at the source instead of security review will be the main method of maintaining operational security. Do members of the military and the media share the same understanding of what that entails? How do military members ensure field commanders will adhere to such a policy? It is the view of scholar/author Pascale Combelles-Siegel that the military will be forced to resort to pools in the future unless a numerical limitation is placed on the number of reporters who can cover military operations. The author would like to assess the media and military's views on the feasibility of such a policy. Is this something either party would be interested in

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<sup>1</sup> Combelles-Siegel, 32.

<sup>2</sup> Combelles-Siegel, 32.

pursuing? Also, the author will assess how the advent of real-time transmission capability impacts media policies. What are the implications for the military's operational concerns? Is this issue adequately addressed in the new policy? The author will try to determine the success of media access to multinational operations, especially in light of current trends in U.S. involvement in humanitarian or peacekeeping missions. Do/should units assigned to U.N. operations follow U.N. public affairs guidance? What issues have arisen as a result of the nature of these operations? Does the policy adequately address this issue? Finally, the author will address the issue of joint information bureaus. The policy addresses how these facilities should be equipped and supplied. Have current/recent JIBs been supplied in the manner prescribed by the Instruction?

In summary, the research questions are:

1. The new policy states that open and independent coverage is the primary goal in allowing media access to military operations. Do military and media representatives define this in the same manner?
2. Although the doctrine states that open and independent coverage is the goal when granting access to military operations, it does not exclude the use of pools. Does this set the military and the media on a collision course during future operations? Do the military and the media share the same views on the use of pools and how it may impact the desire for independent coverage?
3. Technology has evolved at a rapid pace allowing for real-time transmissions from the battlefield. How has this impacted media coverage and public affairs operations? Should the policy have addressed this issue?
4. How do multinational operations affect U.S. military media policies? Is access an issue? Should media procedures for multinational operations be covered in a formal policy?
5. In the past public affairs officers have complained about a lack of equipment, facilities and supplies to operate joint information bureaus in a

proper manner. The new DoD Instruction addresses this issue. In practice, has this problem been completely resolved? If so, how? If not, why not?

### **Scope of Study**

A qualitative analysis of existing research material on media access to military operations and public affairs policies, as well as telephone interviews are the primary research methods for the study. Interview subjects are included in one of two study groups composed of military or media representatives. The composition of each study group is listed in Appendix F. Separate interview agendas were designed for each study group. (See Appendices D and E.) A total of 20 people were interviewed: 10 media representatives and 10 military representatives. Interviews were taped with the subjects' permission and transcribed.

### **Data Limitations**

This study focuses on the specific area of media access to military operations rather than the broader scope of media-military relations as the researcher feels the broader topic has received more than enough treatment by other scholars in the past.

The researcher touches on the legalities of media access only briefly because she feels further study is unwarranted as both members of the media and the military agree that access to military operations is a necessity in most instances.

The military representative study group only includes Air Force representatives. Since the study is being conducted by an Air Force officer for the benefit of the Air Force, it addresses issues from that perspective. Since all the services follow the DoD policies detailed in this study, this factor will not skew the study.

The schedules of some members of the media and military communities precluded their participation in this study. Therefore, some individuals who may have provided unique insights on the subject of media access to military operations were not included in the study.

#### Other Limitations

The author is an Air Force public affairs officer who has her own opinions about the issue of media access to military operations. The author served in the Headquarters, *Operation Support Hope* Joint Information Bureau in Entebbe, Uganda in 1994. However, the author has not participated in such military operations since that time and, therefore, can maintain a greater degree of objectivity than the more recent participants of military operations. The interview agendas are designed to minimize subjectivity.

#### **Arrangement of Thesis**

The first chapter introduces the issue. The current DoD Instruction is the culmination of years of controversy surrounding the issue of media access to military operations. Access restrictions were put in place to control the media and, hence, their coverage of military operations. It was hoped these restrictions would allow the military to maintain public opinion in favor of military operations. The research questions and methods are discussed.

The second chapter introduces the literature on the subject. The history of media access to military operations and events that proved pivotal in shaping the current policy are addressed.

The third chapter outlines the methodology of the study. The chapter includes details on how each question is addressed in the study, as well as background information on the interview subjects. Additionally, limitations of the research approaches and design are discussed.

The fourth chapter includes findings of the individual study groups. These findings are reviewed and then compared to find areas of agreement and disagreement.

In the final chapter, the researcher draws conclusions and makes recommendations based on the findings of the study. Also, areas for further studies are suggested.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### Chapter Overview

On Aug. 2, 1990, Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein sent troops and tanks into neighboring Kuwait, sparking a multinational response led by the United States military and civilian leaders. The event, which led to the 1,000 Hour War, marked the largest U.S. military operation since the Vietnam War.<sup>1</sup>

The conflict, known as Desert Storm, was historical from another prospective. It became the most widely reported combat operation in American history, as more than 1,600 media representatives converged in the Persian Gulf with notepads, television cameras and microphones to cover the spectacle involving 539,000 U.S. troops.<sup>2</sup> This compares to the 2,600 reporters who were accredited over a four-year period to cover approximately 12 million troops deployed across the globe during World War II; the 500 to 700 media representatives who covered 500,00 troops in Vietnam; and the meager 100 journalists who reported on more than two million troops during World War I.<sup>3</sup> The Gulf War media contingent provided audiences with

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<sup>1</sup> Michael D. Steger, "Slicing the Gordian Knot: A Proposal to Reform Military Regulation of Media Coverage of Combat Operations." University of San Francisco School of Law Review, Summer 1994, 972

<sup>2</sup> Terrance Fox, "Closing the Media-Military Technology Gap." Military Review, Nov.-Dec. 1995, Vol. 75, No. 6, 11.

<sup>3</sup> Fox, 11.

daily newspaper accounts and non-stop television coverage that bordered on the surreal.

Forty days after its inception on January 16, 1991, the Gulf War ended in triumph for the United States and her allies. Thanks to an overwhelming air and ground attack, the hapless Iraqi forces surrendered. For military and civilian officials, if not the American public, the victory contained overtones of retribution for failures during the last major conflict, Vietnam. Before sending troops into harms' way, President George Bush promised the American public that "the effort against Iraq would not be ambiguous, contradictory, 'another Vietnam.'"<sup>1</sup> The President made good on his promise by allowing the military, specifically, General Norman H. Schwarzkopf, to run the war, controlling every aspect of the operation, including media operations.<sup>2</sup>

While government officials and the public praised the military's efforts in not allowing the war in the desert to become another Vietnam, the media cried *foul*. Representatives of major news organizations complained of the unprecedented amount of control placed on them in terms of censorship and access. Although the media were not excluded entirely from this operation as they had been in Grenada and Panama [it was politically and practically impossible to do so], they were subjected to a severely restrictive set of guidelines which involved press pools, military escorts and security review, controlling what the media could see, with whom they could talk, and what

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<sup>1</sup> Peter Brastrup, forward, Hotel Warriors: Covering the Gulf War. John J. Fialka, (Washington, D.C.: The Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 1992).

<sup>2</sup> Brastrup in Fialka, forward.

they could report.<sup>1</sup> Where the government and the public were still haunted by the Vietnam era, members of the media pined for the days of old [including pre-Vietnam conflicts, which included [in their opinions] unlimited access to troops and combat areas, as well as unfettered reporting.

However, this has been proven to be an idealized version of history. For as Professor Margaret Blanchard stated, "During the Persian Gulf War many...felt as if they were experiencing something new in terms of suppression of dissent, restrictions on reporters, manipulation of information and the like. Such an assessment of the situation could not be farther from the truth."<sup>2</sup> In reality, from the beginning of American history, the military has, more often than not, exercised some form of control over the media during times of war, whether in terms limited censorship of reports emanating from the battlefield, or outright exclusion from operations.<sup>3</sup>

In order to place the issue of access to combat operations into perspective, the author believes an accurate historical overview is required.

### **Revolutionary War**

The fact that American press coverage of combat operations can be traced to the Revolutionary War is an undisputed fact.<sup>4</sup> What is in dispute is the degree of

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<sup>1</sup> Steger, 972.

<sup>2</sup> Margaret A. Blanchard, "Free Expression and Wartime: Lessons from the Past. Hopes for the Future," Journalism Quarterly. 69 (1992) 5

<sup>3</sup> Paul G. Cassell, "Restrictions on Press Coverage of Military Operations: The Right of Access, Grenada, and "Off-the-Record Wars," Georgetown Law Journal. (February 1985) 932.

<sup>4</sup> Cassell, 932; Steger, 960; William Wilcox, Jr., "Media Coverage of Military Operations: OPLAW Meets the First Amendment," Army Lawyer. (May 1995) 46.

access allotted journalists covering combat operations. Opponents of battlefield restrictions have claimed that since the Revolutionary War, journalists have been allowed to travel with troops on military operations, even when an element of surprise was involved. The journalists argued that this access to combat areas was seen as a vital interest to the public, as reporters were able to provide independent accounts of the actions of the troops, beyond official reports issued by the government.<sup>1</sup>

Journalists claimed that the security of operations and the safety of troops were always protected -- when necessary -- by limiting the number of reporters on the battlefield, restricting reporting on a voluntary basis, censoring (limited) information that may aid the enemy, or by delaying transmission of reports. Media representatives argued that exclusion of journalists from the battlefield was never deemed appropriate, except in special cases involving covert, intelligence or commando operations.<sup>2</sup>

Others, on the other hand, recounted another version of history. According to Paul G. Cassell, author of "Restrictions on Press Coverage of Military Operations: The Right of Access, Grenada and 'Off-the-Record Wars,'" a corps of professional war reporters did not exist during this period in our nation's history.<sup>3</sup> Frank Mott, an authority on the Revolutionary War, concluded that the media "relied almost wholly on the chance arrival of private letters and on official and semi-official messages."<sup>4</sup> Members of the media counter that a lot of newspaper stories were provided by

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<sup>1</sup> Cassell, 932

<sup>2</sup> Cassell, 932.

<sup>3</sup> Cassell, 933; Steger, 960; Wilcox, 46.

<sup>4</sup> Cassell, 933; Steger, 960; Wilcox, 46.

soldiers who did double duty as reporters. If this constitutes journalists being allowed access to military operations, Cassell facetiously argued this same view could be applied to any military operation. For example, "if letters from the front constitute [a] journalistic presence...then a journalistic presence existed in Grenada [where the media were excluded from the action], since soldiers who fought there subsequently published accounts of the battle."<sup>1</sup>

### **WAR OF 1812**

The press has claimed dramatically that "when the nation's capital was captured and burned, correspondents were there."<sup>2</sup> Since the combat zone happened to be a major American city, it is not surprising that there was a journalistic presence there -- albeit, an informal one. As Frank Mott noted, organized war reporting was unheard of during this period and the coverage "of the campaigns and incidents of the War of 1812-14 was...almost as haphazard as that of the Revolutionary War."<sup>3</sup> The war did produce an "an eyewitness who was perhaps America's first war correspondent."<sup>4</sup> James M. Bradford, editor of New Orleans' *Orleans Gazette* enlisted in General Andrew Jackson's army and wrote letters home describing military

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<sup>1</sup> Cassell, 933; Steger, 960; Wilcox, 46.

<sup>2</sup> Cassell, 933-4.

<sup>3</sup> Cassell, 933-4

<sup>4</sup> Frank Aukofer and William P. Lawrence, America's Team: The Odd Couple. A Report on the Relationship Between the Media and the Military (Nashville: The Freedom Forum First Amendment Center, Vanderbilt University, 1995) 35.

operations.<sup>1</sup> The evidence available does not support the notion of special access granted the media to combat operations, according to Cassell.<sup>2</sup>

### MEXICAN-AMERICAN WAR

Newsgathering and technology had progressed to the point where reporters were using the new telegraph and the pony express to transmit stories in this period of increasing competition.<sup>3</sup> That environment spawned intense competition, leading to the birth of the modern war correspondent during the Mexican-American War of 1846-47.<sup>4</sup> For the first time, newspapers provided extensive coverage of a military operation. This was due, in large part, to the liberal access reporters had to the war, for there were no legal restrictions during this military operation. Perhaps more important, the distinction between a reporter and a soldier was blurred.<sup>5</sup> Cassell wrote, "Writing men fought and a number of fighting men wrote. Aside from the representatives of the New Orleans papers, all who served as reporters appear to have attended the conflict primarily as fighters, although a number were journalists by profession."<sup>6</sup> One of those writing men from New Orleans who fought was George W. Kendall, founder of the New Orleans *Picayune*. Kendall worked "the front lines,

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<sup>1</sup> Aukofer and Lawrence, 35.

<sup>2</sup> Cassell, 934.

<sup>3</sup> Aukofer and Lawrence, 35

<sup>4</sup> Wilcox, 46

<sup>5</sup> Cassell 934; Wilcox 46

<sup>6</sup> Cassell 934

riding with McCollough's Rangers."<sup>1</sup> He is credited with the first reports of "the great battles of Contreras and Churubusco, near [the] Mexican capital."<sup>2</sup> Despite the efforts of Kendall and the others and the new-found telegraph technology, the reports were often 10 days old, making access restrictions unnecessary.<sup>3</sup>

### CIVIL WAR

The Civil War was the first major American conflict involving coverage by a significant number of war reporters.<sup>4</sup> Approximately 500 reporters "went off to report the war for the North alone."<sup>5</sup> Of that number, approximately 150 correspondents went out to the field with the soldiers.<sup>6</sup> The correspondents who covered "the war between the states enjoyed extraordinary freedom. Many of them passed easily from one side to the other."<sup>7</sup> Media representatives have suggested that reporters and freelance writers were "always on the front line of battle."<sup>8</sup> Cassell stated that it is true many Northern reporters had access to the frontlines. For example,

The *New York Herald* put sixty-three men into the field and spent nearly \$1 million in covering the war. The *New York Tribune* and the *New York Times*

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<sup>1</sup> Aukofer and Lawrence, 36.

<sup>2</sup> Aukofer and Lawrence, 36.

<sup>3</sup> Aukofer and Lawrence, 36.

<sup>4</sup> Cassell, 934-5; Wilcox, 46; Steger, 960.

<sup>5</sup> Phillip Knightley, *The First Casualty: The War Correspondent As Hero, Propagandandist and Myth Maker*, (London: Quartet Books Limited, 1982) 20.

<sup>6</sup> Aukofer and Lawrence, 36.

<sup>7</sup> Drew Middleton, "Barring Reporters from the Battlefield," *New York Times Magazine*, (Feb. 5, 1984), 37.

<sup>8</sup> Cassell, 934-5

each had at least twenty correspondents, and smaller papers, in places such as Cincinnati and Boston, all had their own men at the front.”<sup>1</sup>

But, because of the breadth of the war, many important skirmishes were waged outside the purview of the media. However, for the most part, Northern reporters were granted a wide latitude when it came to coverage of the war. The correspondents were accorded the most liberal of privileges, according to Cassell. “Government passes were put into their hands; they had the use of government horses and wagons; they were given transportation with baggage privileges on government steamers and the military trains.”<sup>2</sup> This was done because leaders such as President Abraham Lincoln was convinced newspaper coverage was “one of the keys to maintaining public support.”<sup>3</sup>

Additionally, the Northern reporters held the confidence of military leaders and were seldom unable to obtain desired information. While staying behind the lines, as was common, reporters were able to hear a great deal of officers’ talk, picking up camp gossip and invaluable pieces of military information.<sup>4</sup>

However, there is evidence that both Northern and Southern generals excluded members of the press from military operations temporarily and, sometimes,

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<sup>1</sup> Knightley, 20.

<sup>2</sup> Cassell, 935

<sup>3</sup> Aukofer and Lawrence, 36.

<sup>4</sup> Cassell, 935.

permanently.<sup>1</sup> General William Tecumseh Sherman, in particular, despised the presence of reporters within his ranks. He said:

Now to every army and almost every general a newspaper reporter goes along, filling up our transports, swelling our trains, reporting our progressing at places, picking up dropped expressions, inciting jealousy and discontent, and doing infinite mischief.<sup>2</sup>

And when General Sherman found that his 1861 operations in Kentucky had been compromised by press reports of his movements, he retaliated by banishing "every newspaper correspondent from the lines, and promised summary punishment to all who should in the future give information concerning his position, strength or movements."<sup>3</sup>

Additionally, for a period of about a week in 1864, General Ulysses S. Grant, who usually favored war correspondents travelling with his troops, restricted access from not only newspaper reporter, but also from Washington authorities. It was considered proper because "it was understood that war correspondents as a class were so far under the authority of the commanding general of the Army which they accompanied that he might issue rules and regulations to govern their conduct."<sup>4</sup>

In addition to restricting access to troops, Union officials, including President Abraham Lincoln, censored correspondents on occasion to prevent exposure of

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<sup>1</sup> Cassell, 935; Wilcox, 46; Steger 961.

<sup>2</sup> Knightley, 28.

<sup>3</sup> Cassell, 935.

<sup>4</sup> Cassell, 935.

military secrets.<sup>1</sup> Several times, the North completely shut down newspapers for publishing secret information. However, public outcry usually necessitated quickly lifting the restrictions.<sup>2</sup> Also, President Lincoln ordered that all telegraph lines be placed under the auspices of the military in February 1862. This prevented members of the media from submitting reports without prior censorship. The secretary of war, Edwin Stanton, arrested editors, threatened proprietors with court-martial, and banned reporters from the front for breaking his rules.<sup>3</sup> He even ordered that reporters be shot if they refused to hand over dispatches. But for the most part, the media were able to print whatever they liked.<sup>4</sup>

Reporters on the side of the Confederacy faced greater restrictions than their Northern counterparts. The Southern media were usually excluded from the front lines, and the small size of the press corps meant that a lot of battles went uncovered.<sup>5</sup>

As Knightley noted in his book First Casualty, there were only about “a hundred war correspondents in the field.”<sup>6</sup> As Cassell noted

For a great battle or campaign to occur without the presence of representatives of the Northern newspapers was exceptional, for the Southern press to be inadequately represented was commonplace, and on a number of occasions it had no civilian [reporters] on the scene.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Wilcox, 46.

<sup>2</sup> Cassell, 935.

<sup>3</sup> Knightley, 24.

<sup>4</sup> Cassell, 936.

<sup>5</sup> Wilcox, 46.

<sup>6</sup> Knightley, 24.

<sup>7</sup> Cassell, 935.

Although greatly restricted in what they were able to observe and describe, reporters were not completely excluded from Confederate lines until May 1862, when General Bragg barred them from his Mississippi headquarters, a policy that was quickly copied by other theater commanders.<sup>1</sup> Although some reporters did return to the lines by August of that year, the period of June 1862-1863 saw a dearth of quality reporting in the Southern press. In fact, some of the best material that appeared was borrowed from later-arriving Northern publications.<sup>2</sup>

### SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR

By the Spanish-American War, improved transportation and communications technology only enhanced the types of problems that came to fore during the Civil War.<sup>3</sup>

News dissemination had improved dramatically. Electric motors drove printing presses, the Linotype machines simplified typesetting, the Atlantic cable had been laid, telegraph wires spanned the country from coast to coast, and the telephone had come into use.<sup>4</sup>

Additionally, sensationalist *yellow journalism* was at its height during this period, as Joseph Pulitzer's *New York World* and William Randolph Hearst's *New York Journal* competed fiercely for readership. In doing so, the papers, especially Hearst's editorial page, were successful in instigating the war.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Cassell. 935.

<sup>2</sup> Cassell. 935.

<sup>3</sup> Everette E. Dennis, The Media At War: The Press and The Persian Gulf War. 9.

<sup>4</sup> Aukofer and Lawrence. 37.

<sup>5</sup> Aukofer and Lawrence. 37.

Despite the fact that some newspapers used emerging technologies to “help transmit reports that contained information about U.S. ship movements and combat plans,” military restrictions on the press were generally few.<sup>1</sup> As an example, after U.S. ships blockaded Havana, the *New York Times* published two reports the day the blockade began. A couple of days later, the *Times* carried a story “On Board the Flagship New York, Off Havana,” providing readers with minute-by-minute details of the operation.<sup>2</sup>

Cassell noted that the Spanish-American War saw some incidents of censorship and exclusion of journalists from the war zones. For example, the government tried to control the press by banning access to the combat zone and closing cable offices, but these efforts were unsuccessful.<sup>3</sup>

### **POST SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR**

Media representatives have claimed that media access to combat zones was always granted during the more than 20 military expeditions conducted by the United States into the Caribbean and Central America from 1880-1924.<sup>4</sup> While it is true the press was allowed access to limited actions, the press were not present during all military operations in this period. For example, General John J. Pershing excluded the

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<sup>1</sup> Cassell, 936; Dennis, 9.

<sup>2</sup> Cassell, 936; Dennis, 9.

<sup>3</sup> Aukofer and Lawrence, 37.

<sup>4</sup> Cassell, 936-7; Wilcox, 46.

press entirely from the Mindoro Island pacification operation in the Philippines and conducted a successful military campaign without the scrutiny of the media.<sup>1</sup>

### WORLD WAR I

During World War I, censorship and access restrictions were rife thanks to procedures pre-established by Britain and France, U.S. allies, who instituted the practices for security purposes before the United States entered the conflict.<sup>2</sup> And because of the nature of the war, which included trench warfare, journalistic coverage of the war was nearly impossible without access to the battlefields. Therefore, the British and the French conveniently decided to entirely exclude reporters from their armies.<sup>3</sup>

During this war, the United States used more formalized mechanisms than in the past to control the media both at home and abroad. President Woodrow Wilson created the U.S. Committee on Public Information, headed by former newspaper editor George Creel.<sup>4</sup> The CPI was formed to control domestic propaganda and censorship. The Committee promulgated a set of guidelines, which the press freely accepted.<sup>5</sup> Those guidelines banned the publication of, among other things, "troop movements in the United States, ship sailings and the identification of units being sent

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<sup>1</sup> Cassell, 936-7; Wilcox, 46.

<sup>2</sup> Cassell. 937.

<sup>3</sup> Cassell. 937.

<sup>4</sup> Steger. 962

<sup>5</sup> Steger. 962.

overseas.”<sup>1</sup> Steger stated that the guidelines were the first such developed regarding the dissemination of sensitive information, a blueprint which the military has continued to refine and develop.<sup>2</sup>

In Europe, the original press censor serving with the armies was replaced by a committee made up of former journalists and Army officers. Steger noted that during its existence, the committee revoked the credentials of only about five of the five dozen accredited journalists for security breaches.<sup>3</sup>

By the time General Pershing and American Expeditionary Force arrived in France, the British and French had ended their policy of excluding all journalists from the front lines and opened many channels of communication.<sup>4</sup> However, General John J. Pershing favored the restrictions that were left in place because of his previous experience of having persuaded the “War Department to keep the press away during his pacification of Mindoro Island in the Phillipines.”<sup>5</sup> That enabled him to “fight a successful campaign without any media scrutiny.”<sup>6</sup>

American media representatives faced numerous obstacles to their war reporting efforts due to the restrictions promulgated by the CPI. For example, reporters had to be accredited, which included agreeing to pay a fee of \$1,000 to the

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<sup>1</sup> Steger. 962.

<sup>2</sup> Steger. 962.

<sup>3</sup> Steger. 962.

<sup>4</sup> Cassell. 937.

<sup>5</sup> Middleton. 37.

<sup>6</sup> Middleton. 37.

Army to cover equipment and maintenance and the posting of a \$10,000 bond to ensure the reporter would act like a "gentleman of the press."

Correspondents agreed to, among other things, "to repeat no information he received at the front unless it had previously passed the censor; he was to give neither name nor location of any unit; there was to be no revelation of future plans of any information that Military Intelligence might have thought of value to the enemy."<sup>1</sup>

Any infraction meant forfeiture of the \$10,000 bond.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, General Pershing attempted to control coverage by limiting the number of correspondents who could be accredited to thirty-one. Pershing's attempt failed because of the influx of unaccredited journalists and visitors.<sup>3</sup> Secondly, the media faced rigorous censorship and were delayed in reporting significant developments, "such as the failure of supplies to reach the American Expeditionary Force in Europe, because officials in the War Department in Washington feared that such stories would shake the nation's confidence in the war effort."<sup>4</sup> Those who published reports without a censor's approval had their credentials revoked.<sup>5</sup> Third, media access to battlefields was restricted. In the beginning, reporters were not allowed to visit the front lines. However, these restrictions were gradually lifted and accredited journalists were even

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<sup>1</sup> Aukofer and Lawrence. 38.

<sup>2</sup> Knightley. 108.

<sup>3</sup> Knightley. 108.

<sup>4</sup> Wilcox. 46.

<sup>5</sup> Cassell. 937

allowed to live with soldiers.<sup>1</sup> Finally, wider access was granted to American journalists as the military allowed them to accompany troops into battle in 1918.<sup>2</sup>

## WORLD WAR II

World War II is viewed by many as the pinnacle of military-media relations because of the broad access granted journalists, and the media's obvious support for the war effort. During this period in history, government officials viewed the press as an invaluable ally and tried to cultivate it and public opinion through favorable treatment.<sup>3</sup> The military granted a vast amount of access to troops and operations. Journalists "wore uniforms and often travelled with military units, and editors accepted battlefield and home-front censorship as the price of national security."<sup>4</sup>

In addition to "routine battlefield reporting, the press accompanied troops on amphibious landings, bombing runs, and parachute drops into enemy territory."<sup>5</sup> Cassell noted that when reporters went on patrols they were "strafed and shelled and frequently became the targets for snipers."<sup>6</sup>

Journalists were allowed to accompany assault troops in the first stage of battle during numerous invasions: "Nine reporters even accompanied British commandos on their raid on German-occupied Dieppe. Also along the fronts in Tunisia, Sicily, Italy,

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<sup>1</sup> Cassell, 937.

<sup>2</sup> Cassell, 937.

<sup>3</sup> Steger, 963.

<sup>4</sup> Aukofer and Lawrence. 38.

<sup>5</sup> Steger, 963.

<sup>6</sup> Cassell, 939

and northwest Europe, reporters had complete freedom of movement.”<sup>1</sup> Although access was good during the war, media representatives did not go everywhere as there were not enough reporters to cover every battle, and most of the major action’s, including the Normandy D-Day landings of June 6, 1944 and the Battle of the Bulge, were -- initially -- covered from the rear.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, the media were not allowed to cover the Battle of Midway and the dropping of the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima.<sup>3</sup>

However, the media did enjoy a great deal of freedom. And in exchange for this broad access to front lines and troops, the media compromised by allowing broad restrictions through the auspices of two government offices. The American government created the Office of Information, headed by broadcaster Elmer Davis, in June 1942.<sup>4</sup> OWI was charged to act as a go-between for the press and the government and supervised propaganda efforts. Additionally, the Office of Censorship, headed by former Associated Press news editor Byron Price, published a Code of Wartime Practice.<sup>5</sup> The restrictions were implemented differently in the United States and overseas. For example, in the U.S. the Army and Navy applied the concept of *censorship at the source* (a policy that would be revived after the Persian Gulf War). This policy meant it was the responsibility of the military to prevent the media from

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<sup>1</sup> Cassell, 939.

<sup>2</sup> Cassell, 939.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, 940.

<sup>4</sup> Peter Braestrup, Battle Lines: Report of the Twentieth Century Fund Task Force on the Military and the Media. (Press Publications, New York 1985) 29.

<sup>5</sup> Knightley, 259.

learning information they did not want them to know.<sup>1</sup> Overseas, the restrictive controls were less cumbersome because accreditation was used to enforce censorship and restrict access to the battlefield.

Correspondents needed a press pass from the War Department and a passport from the State Department. Once shipped off to the front, reporters were assigned to "press camps" -- facilities that were attached to regular military forces and were capable of handling administration, communication and briefings.<sup>2</sup>

As part of the requirements of accreditation and, therefore access to the theaters of war, reporters had to sign an agreement to submit all their copy to military or Navy censorship.<sup>3</sup>

"Everything written, photographed or broadcast was scrutinized by censors,"<sup>4</sup> according to Drew Middleton of *The New York Times Magazine*. "Anything that did not meet the high command's considerations of security was deleted."<sup>5</sup>

Steger noted that restrictions were much easier to enforce in the Pacific because the action centered around naval warfare. This allowed greater control of both correspondents and their reports.<sup>6</sup> The policies on censorship and access led to distorted news accounts in some cases, according to Cassell. "On the Pacific front, the

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<sup>1</sup> Knightley, 259.

<sup>2</sup> Aukofer and Lawrence, 39.

<sup>3</sup> Cassell, 938.

<sup>4</sup> Middleton, 61.

<sup>5</sup> Middleton, 61.

<sup>6</sup> Steger, 963.

military conceded only the loss of two battleships at Pearl Harbor, when in fact there five were sunk and three were damaged.”<sup>1</sup> Censors attempted (but failed) to conceal the story of the Battle of Midway, fearing the Japanese forces would learn the United States had broken their naval codes.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, journalists were not allowed to mention possible effects of radiation after atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.<sup>3</sup>

Reporters in the European theater were affected by these restrictive policies as well, but to a lesser degree. Nonetheless, stories such as “the loss of 20 transport planes and more than 400 American soldiers to American guns at Bari could not be reported, and a news blackout was initially imposed during the Battle of the Bulge.”<sup>4</sup>

Middleton noted that “World War II was the last in which total censorship prevailed.”<sup>5</sup> He said censorship in later wars was replaced by security at the source.

World War II is also noteworthy because during this period “radio correspondents set up what could be regarded as a precursor of the modern press pool.”<sup>6</sup> Frank Aukofer and James P. Lawrence, authors of America’s Team: The Odd Couple, noted that radio correspondents “were forced to work together because of

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<sup>1</sup> Cassell, 938.

<sup>2</sup> Cassell, 939; Steger, 963.

<sup>3</sup> Cassell, 939.

<sup>4</sup> Cassell, 939.

<sup>5</sup> Middleton, 61.

<sup>6</sup> Aukofer and Lawrence, 39.

limited radio transmission facilities.”<sup>1</sup> Historian Robert W. Desmond stated, “One correspondent might serve as a ‘neutral voice’ to be carried by any or all networks.”<sup>2</sup> Pooling arrangements would, in later years, become a source of great tension in the debate about battlefield access.

### **KOREAN WAR**

During the Korean conflict, policies on access and censorship basically paralleled those used during World War II. Adherence to the rules were voluntary in part because the sudden outbreak of war caught both the military and the media unprepared.<sup>3</sup>

Media representatives generally practiced self-censorship and followed their own guidelines.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, correspondents had a great amount of freedom to write critical pieces on the United States’ involvement in Korea. After several particularly disastrous American encounters with the North Koreans, a young lieutenant asked a reporter, “Are you correspondents telling the people back home the truth? Are you telling them that we have nothing to fight with and that it is an utterly useless war?”<sup>5</sup> To the dismay of the military, many reporters were doing just that.<sup>6</sup> And as United Nations losses accrued, government officials began asserting greater control over

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<sup>1</sup> Aukofer and Lawrence. 39.

<sup>2</sup> Aukofer and Lawrence. 39.

<sup>3</sup> Steger, 964.

<sup>4</sup> Aukofer and Lawrence. 39.

<sup>5</sup> Knightley, 321.

<sup>6</sup> Knightley, 321.

media operations.<sup>1</sup> Journalists found themselves at the mercy of the army for communications, transportation, and housing. In Korea, all three were so far below standards that Hal Boyle, the Associated Press columnist, wrote “never since and including the Civil War have correspondents had so few facilities vital to their trade.”<sup>2</sup> When the media appealed to the military for better facilities, they were told the equipment was more urgently needed elsewhere.<sup>3</sup>

In one of the more ironic twists of military-media relations, Korean War correspondents banded together and requested full, compulsory restrictions be imposed. Their reasoning was that General MacArthur’s harsh controls resulted in, “You write what you like and we’ll shoot you if we don’t like it” approach. This approach meant journalists were expelled whenever military authorities were displeased with their reports.<sup>4</sup> General MacArthur’s headquarters imposed full censorship in December 1950. The following month, media representatives were placed under the complete jurisdiction of the army.<sup>5</sup> The reporters could be punished for any one of a long list of violations. Punitive measures included suspension of privileges, deportation and trial by court martial.<sup>6</sup> Despite the restrictive censorship

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<sup>1</sup> Knightley, 321.

<sup>2</sup> Cassell, 940; Knightley, 320.

<sup>3</sup> Cassell, 940; Knightley, 320.

<sup>4</sup> Cassell, 940; Steger, 964.

<sup>5</sup> Wilcox, 47.

<sup>6</sup> Cassell, 940

policies, American journalists were often present at the front. For example, the media accompanied troops on the Inchon landing.<sup>1</sup>

Retired Army Major General Winant Sidle, former chief of Military Assistance Command Vietnam Information, described the military-media relationship at the end of the Korean War as one in which neither was satisfied, but which “was apparently accepted by both...as the solution to their basic conflict.”<sup>2</sup>

### VIETNAM CONFLICT

Although there are many who still claim that the press “lost” the Vietnam War by turning the American public against the effort through biased reporting, the war represented the apex of press freedom on the battlefield. Journalists had virtually unrestricted access to operations and troops and were only required to follow minor ground rules designed to maintain operational security.<sup>3</sup> The ground rules were:

1. There will be no casualty reports on a daily basis and reporters should refrain from giving out unit identifications.
2. Troop movements should not be announced and will not be confirmed until the enemy knows of the movements.
3. No unit identifications should be given when reporting on battles.
4. Similar specific information should not be released on air strikes.
5. Next of kin should not learn of a death through a news photograph and privacy rights of the wounded should be respected.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Cassell, 941.

<sup>2</sup> Fox, 11.

<sup>3</sup> Wilcox, 47; Steger, 964-965.

<sup>4</sup> Steger, 965.

Peter Braestrup, author of Battle Lines, stated that the media were treated better in this war than in any previous conflict.

General Westmoreland provided at least his rear-echelon troops...with an extraordinary array of stateside amenities (swimming pools, cold beer, hot showers). Newsmen had access to all the amenities enjoyed by rear-echelon military officers. In addition, the U.S. mission in Saigon provided "dedicated" spaces on in-country air transport and major press camps in each of South Vietnam's three outlying military regions, with telephone communications and daily flights to Saigon. As time went on, helicopters in some army divisions were on occasion assigned exclusively to bring reporters to units in the field; elsewhere newsmen could often hitchhike aboard helicopters or fixed-wing aircraft...The helicopter peculiarly suited the fast in-and-out desires of television news crews; with luck, they could get to the scene of the action, get some "good film," and be back in Saigon or Da Nang the evening of the same day to get the film on its way to America.<sup>1</sup>

However, ironically, it was during the Vietnam War that relations between the military and the media deteriorated most. "Observers have stated that while war correspondents traditionally had served as partners of the military, press boosterism declined during the Vietnam War."<sup>2</sup> Distrust grew between the military and the media, with most government officials viewing the press as "unpatriotic and reckless with the facts."<sup>3</sup> According to Middleton, "many officers became increasingly convinced that the growing hostility to the war on the part of the American public was due to biased and inaccurate reporting by the correspondents."<sup>4</sup> On the other hand, the press began to mistrust military accounts of operations."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Braestrup. 67.

<sup>2</sup> Wilcox. 47.

<sup>3</sup> Wilcox. 47.

<sup>4</sup> Middleton. 61.

<sup>5</sup> Wilcox. 47.

Adding fuel to this fire, was the fact that this war became the first American conflict televised nightly. Many military leaders felt that television provided audiences with sensational snippets of drama that was often devoid of facts, leaving the public with misleading perceptions about the war's progression.<sup>1</sup> In fact, television was sending home reports to the American public that contrasted sharply with official accounts of the conflict.<sup>2</sup> As Retired Army Colonel Harry Summers stated in his book, On Strategy,:

In order to smooth our relations with the American public we began to use euphemisms to hide the horror of war. We became the Department of the Army (not the War Department) and our own terminology avoided mention of the battlefield. We did not kill the enemy, we inflicted casualties; we did not destroy things, we neutralized targets. These evasions allowed the notion to grow that we could apply military force in a sanitary and surgical manner. In so doing, we unwittingly prepared the way for the reaction that was to follow. We had concealed from the American people the true nature of war at precisely the time that television brought its realities into their living rooms in living color. As a result, to many Americans, Vietnam became the most destructive, the most horrible, the most terrible war waged in the history of the world. This viewpoint has persisted in the face of all historical evidence to the contrary.<sup>3</sup>

Although military leaders in Washington repeatedly thought about imposing a censorship apparatus and limiting access, the Pentagon rejected such control every time.<sup>4</sup> Restrictions were rejected on both political and logistical grounds. Restrictions were not put in place because Vietnam was an "undeclared conflict that became increasingly politicized in the United States...formal censoring of the media in such a

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<sup>1</sup> Steger, 966.

<sup>2</sup> Brown, 11.

<sup>3</sup> Harry G. Summers qtd in Brown, 11.

<sup>4</sup> Steger, 965.

context would have been both hypocritical and inconsistent with open debate over the war.”<sup>1</sup> Logistically, restricting access was deemed inappropriate because of the “U.S. government’s inability to control all means of communication out of South Vietnam or to prevent correspondents from filing dispatches from points outside the country.”<sup>2</sup> However, attempts were made to influence coverage by other means. For example, the State Department sent a cable to its information service “warning against providing transport for correspondents on military missions that might result in the correspondents’ producing undesirable stories.”<sup>3</sup>

Despite the undeniably liberal access policy in Vietnam, media representatives were not able to cover all military operations. As Cassell noted, “In January 1971, for the first six days of the Dewey Cannon II operation, a news embargo was maintained, no U.S. correspondents were permitted in the operational area and no reports were permitted on the operation.”<sup>4</sup> Also, historian William V. Hammond noted there were not enough reporters to cover all the combat operations in Southeast Asia.<sup>5</sup> There were approximately 500 to 700 journalists accredited at one time.<sup>6</sup> Of those, few correspondents, “perhaps 40 in all, were in the field with U.S. troops at a given time; except during the rare periods of sustained combat, such as [the] Tet [Offensive]

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<sup>1</sup> Steger, 965.

<sup>2</sup> Fox, 11.

<sup>3</sup> Cassell, 942.

<sup>4</sup> Cassell, 942.

<sup>5</sup> Fox, 11.

<sup>6</sup> Fox, 11; Knightley, 370.

1968.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, media reports only surfaced when there was enough news to report.<sup>2</sup>

After the Vietnam War, government and military leaders decided that they needed to exert “more rigorous and systematic control over where the media went, what they saw and what they reported.”<sup>3</sup>

### **GRENADA**

The pivotal event in terms of media access to military operations occurred when, on October 25, 1983, President Ronald Reagan, in an operation dubbed *Urgent Fury*, ordered 3,000 American troops into the island of Grenada. Reagan explained to the American public that the invasion was necessary to “protect American citizens and to restore democratic institutions on the island.”<sup>4</sup> Ironically, the operation sparked a debate about the role of the press in a free society, as this was the first occasion in which the media were totally excluded from an entire military operation.<sup>5</sup>

During the critical hours and days of the “first armed U.S. intervention in the Caribbean in nearly two decades,”<sup>6</sup> military officials refused to allow media direct access to the war zone. That’s because during the planning stages of the operation

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<sup>1</sup> Braestrup, 65.

<sup>2</sup> Fox, 11.

<sup>3</sup> Steger, 967.

<sup>4</sup> Cassell, 931.

<sup>5</sup> Saul Friedman, “White House Admits Turning News Control to Pentagon,” The Denver Post, (Oct. 28, 1983) 15A.

<sup>6</sup> Sandy Grady, “Covering the Battle with Pentagon Handouts,” The Denver Post, (Oct. 28, 1983) .

Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman John W. Vessey appealed to President Reagan to restrict media access because he felt "the military could not easily carry out the Grenada mission unless there were no press and television along to worry U.S. commanders."<sup>1</sup> The reasoning for this had a lot to do with residual resentment toward the media for what the military perceived as biased reporting, particularly by television, during the Vietnam War.

The majors and commanders of the Vietnam War who believed the media had worked against the American command there had become influential generals and admirals determined not to expose the Grenada operation to what they continue to view as a hostile adversary. The attitude was reflected by President Reagan during a December [1983] press conference when he said that in Vietnam the press was not on 'our side, militarily.'<sup>2</sup>

Additionally, "the success of the British in controlling press access to the fighting in the Falklands loomed large in military thinking."<sup>3</sup> It also loomed large in the thinking of those in the White House as well, as on Reagan press aide confirmed "there were a lot of discussions"<sup>4</sup> about what the British had done there.

In contrast to past administrations that tried to micromanage the military, Reagan acquiesced to the desires of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to let the military handle the operation and the media.

Military leaders thought a modified version of the Falklands model would be useful in controlling access and swaying public opinion about the U.S. military action

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<sup>1</sup> Braestrup, 90.

<sup>2</sup> Middleton, 37.

<sup>3</sup> Braestrup, 90.

<sup>4</sup> Mark Hertsgaard, On Bended Knee: The Press and the Reagan Presidency. (New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1988) 211.

in Grenada. Government officials took lessons learned from Great Britain's campaign and applied them to this operation.<sup>1</sup> Those lessons, as derived from a Naval War College Review article by Navy Lieutenant Commander Arthur A. Humphries are:

1. To maintain popular support for a war, your side must not be seen as ruthless barbarians.
2. If you don't want to erode the public's confidence in the government's war aims, then you cannot allow the public's sons to be wounded or maimed right in front of them via their TV sets at home.
3. You must, therefore, control correspondents' access to the fighting.
4. You must invoke censorship in order to halt aid to both the known and suspected enemies.
5. You must rally aid in the form of patriotism at home and in the battle zone but not to the extent of repeated triumphalism.
6. You must tell your side of the story first, at least for psychological advantage, causing the enemy to play catch-up politically, with resultant strategic effect.
7. To generate aid, and confuse at least the domestic detractors, report the truth about the enemy and let the enemy defectors tell their horror story.
8. Finally, in order to affect or help assure "favorable objectivity," you must be able to exclude certain correspondents from the battle zone.<sup>2</sup>

Therefore, with Vietnam and the Falklands conflicts in mind, a decision was made by the White House and the Pentagon to restrict media access to the operation. "But unlike the British, who have an Official Secrets Act and brought along on the invasion correspondents who had agreed to censorship,"<sup>3</sup> no arrangements were made

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<sup>1</sup> Steger, 969.

<sup>2</sup> Jacqueline Sharkey, Under Fire: U.S. Military Restrictions on the Media From Grenada to the Persian Gulf. (Washington, D.C.: The Center for Public Integrity, 1991) 66.

<sup>3</sup> Friedman, 15A.

for the U.S. military to take along journalists to witness the assault, nor were there any provisions in place to "ensure that newsmen could be designated, accredited, and alerted in advance without hazard to secrecy of the operation," according to Braestrup.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, no plans were made by the military to accommodate journalists even after the assault phase was over. According to Braestrup, "no public affairs officers were involved in the planning, and hence could not argue for a follow-up press plan. In essence, the public affairs aspects of Grenada were left in limbo prior to H-hour."<sup>2</sup> In fact, no communications, transport or other support were earmarked in advance for either the media or military public affairs officers.<sup>3</sup> "Lurking behind these actions is an attitude on the part of the Joint Chiefs that all facets of an operation, including press relations, should lie with the operational military, not with military PA or civilians."<sup>4</sup>

Publicly, the Pentagon used "security reasons" and "because their presence would complicate the force's logistical problems," as justification for the media restrictions.<sup>5</sup> The most incendiary justification in the eyes of the media was danger to correspondents.

But reporters had gone on similar commando raids during World War II. They were also present during fierce fighting at Alamein, Tunis, Salerno, Anzio, Iwo

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<sup>1</sup> Braestrup, 90.

<sup>2</sup> Braestrup, 90.

<sup>3</sup> Braestrup, 93.

<sup>4</sup> Henry E. Catto, Jr., "Dateline Grenada: The Media and the Military Go at It," The Washington Post, (Oct. 30, 1983) C7.

<sup>5</sup> Cassell, 943.

Jima and Guadalcanal and a hundred other battlefields in Europe and the Pacific. Danger is part of every war correspondent's job.<sup>1</sup>

As Jerry Friedheim, then executive vice president of the American Newspaper Publishers Association noted, "the argument that the safety of journalists was at stake is simply not valid. Journalists have always been willing to take the risks necessary to cover uniformed people in combat."<sup>2</sup>

Therefore, when the conflict began, the only news accounts from the island were from official government reports and ham radio operators who lived on the island. The day following the initial invasion, while the skirmish continued, Pentagon officials told the media that they would not be allowed access to the zone until conditions were safer.<sup>3</sup>

After repeated complaints from the media about being excluded from Grenada and the lack of Pentagon planning for reporters, Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs-designate Michael Burch sought and received permission from Secretary of Defense Casper Weinberger and General Vessey to start making preparations to accommodate the growing crowd of frustrated journalists on nearby Barbados.<sup>4</sup>

Shortly thereafter, military members were dispatched to set up a Joint Information Bureau (JIB) in a building at Bridgetown, Barbados' Grantley Adams

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<sup>1</sup> Middleton, 69.

<sup>2</sup> Jerry Friedheim, "Censor Journalists Covering Wars?," U.S. News & World Report, (Nov. 14, 1983) 34.

<sup>3</sup> Cassell, 944.

<sup>4</sup> Braestrup, 94.

Airport near a U.S. Air Force base detachment that controlled the shuttle of U.S. aircraft to and from Grenada.<sup>1</sup> The JIB director secured permission from Vice Admiral Joseph Metcalf, commander of the operation, to take the media to Grenada on October 27. The first reporters to go to Grenada's Point Salines airfield included three Caribbean journalists as well as 12 Americans. "The three major wire services and the four major television networks were represented, including one camera crew (CBS) that was supposed to share its product with the rival networks."<sup>2</sup>

Although the reporters were allowed to visit the island, the military controlled coverage in other ways. The 15 pool journalists, who were allowed on the island for a few hours, were always escorted by military officials who were without communication, transport or command guidance on how to deal with the media.<sup>3</sup> The military escorts took the pool journalists on a "guided group tour" that did not allow them to go very far or get to the units in action.<sup>4</sup> It wasn't until five days after the invasion that media representatives were allowed unlimited access to the island.<sup>5</sup>

Journalists were outraged by the U.S. government's conduct of the operation, charging that the restrictions were "unprecedented and intolerable."<sup>6</sup> Columnist William Safire stated that President Reagan's policy on media in Grenada assured that

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<sup>1</sup> Brastrup, 94.

<sup>2</sup> Brastrup, 95.

<sup>3</sup> Brastrup, 95.

<sup>4</sup> Brastrup, 96.

<sup>5</sup> Cassell, 944.

<sup>6</sup> Cassell, 932.

the coverage would be handled by government public relations officers. "He not only barred access, but in effect kidnapped and whisked away American reporters on the scene."<sup>1</sup>

Network correspondent John Chancellor viewed actions in Grenada as an infringement on the First Amendment rights of the media:

It is not only the privilege of the American press to be present at moments of historic importance, it is the responsibility of the press to be there. The men who died in the invasion of Grenada were representing values in American life; one of those values is the right of the citizenry to know what their government is doing. That principle, of the press as observer and as critic of the government, was established at the beginning of the United States. It is the responsibility of all citizens to uphold it.<sup>2</sup>

Additionally, journalists charged that the administration had engaged in a disinformation campaign while denying access. The media were forced to rely on "...maps of Grenada. And many talking heads -- politicians and generals and PR spokesmen."<sup>3</sup> The *New York Times* alleged that "in the aftermath...of Grenada, it has become clear that...officials disseminated much inaccurate information and many unproven assertions" while at the same time withholding facts and impeding the ability of journalists to verify information.<sup>4</sup> The *Times* asserted that the Reagan administration had among other things, "inflated the estimates of the number of Cuban firefighters on the island, and distorted the size and firepower of the invading force."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Cassell, 944.

<sup>2</sup> John Chancellor qtd in Brown, 13.

<sup>3</sup> Grady.

<sup>4</sup> Cassell, 945.

<sup>5</sup> Cassell, 945.

Although the operation was a success from a military perspective (in terms of meeting objectives), one could not glean that from the tone of news accounts that resulted from the incident. This led military leaders to question the wisdom of the restriction policies, as they realized that the "cost of denying access outweigh any benefits."<sup>1</sup>

For example, Admiral Metcalf told a Naval Academy alumni meeting in San Diego that, "if the Pentagon had proposed it, he would have agreed to having a pool of eight reporters accompany his task force off Grenada,"<sup>2</sup> He said his decision to exclude the media was more "from attention to urgent operational matters than a thought-out position on the issue of the press."<sup>3</sup> Metcalf admitted that he was worried about how a mass of reporters would have affected the invasion. "I did not want the press around where I would start second-guessing what I was doing."<sup>4</sup> However, Metacalf later acknowledged that the press ban was counterproductive because "the media expended more column inches and time defending their prerogatives than in reporting the story."<sup>5</sup> Metcalf said that all the American public cares about in the long-

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<sup>1</sup> Cato, C7.

<sup>2</sup> Braestrup, 93.

<sup>3</sup> Vice Admiral Joseph Metcalf III, US Navy (ret.), "The Mother of the Mother," Proceedings, (August 1991) 56.

<sup>4</sup> Braestrup, 93.

<sup>5</sup> Pascale Combelles-Siegel, "The Troubled Path to the Pentagon's Rules on Media Access to the Battlefield: Grenada to Today," (U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute: Carlisle Barracks, Penn., May 15, 1996) 8.

run is that "we won. Nevertheless, pundits and anchormen still talk about Grenada in terms of a failure."<sup>1</sup>

However vociferous the media's argument was about their treatment in Grenada, they had difficulty gaining support from the American public who were in favor of the military action that, in their view, redeemed the country's honor. According to Mark Hertsgaard, author of On Bended Knee, "the invasion of Grenada came to be remembered in the United States as a reaffirmation of American power and resolve after the humiliation in Vietnam and Iran [during the 1979 hostage crisis.]"<sup>2</sup> A nationwide poll by the *Los Angeles Times* conducted in November 1983 showed that of those polled 51 percent favored denial of access while 41 percent disapproved. Additionally, letters to NBC on the subject ran ten-to-one against admitting the press.<sup>3</sup>

In retaliation for the actions in Grenada, Hustler magazine publisher Larry Flynt decided to wage a legal battle against the government. He sought a declaratory judgment and injunctive relief, but the case was dismissed as moot.<sup>4</sup> The court ruled that there was no "reasonable expectation" that the controversy would recur and that even if the controversy was still "live," the court would not issue an injunction because it would "limit the range of options available to the commanders in the field in the

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<sup>1</sup> Combelles-Siegel, 9.

<sup>2</sup> Hertsgaard, 212.

<sup>3</sup> Cassell, 945; Combelles-Siegel, 8.

<sup>4</sup> Wilcox, 47.

future, possibly jeopardizing the success of military operations and the lives of military personnel and thereby gravely damaging the national interest.”<sup>1</sup>

Despite an unsuccessful legal challenge to the media policy and public support for access restrictions, the military decided to negotiate with the media.<sup>2</sup> Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General John Vessey, gave two primary reasons for taking this tack: The negative coverage the operation received because of the press exclusion, and the “necessity to make timely and accurate information available to the public, Congress, and the news media.”<sup>3</sup> Therefore, the media asked for, and were granted, a formal Department of Defense review of media access to combat operations.<sup>4</sup> In requesting the review, the media representatives of 10 major organizations said they would “agree on limited restrictions such delayed filing and military censorship, so long as reporters were not excluded from combat missions and thus denied the right to independent reporting.”<sup>5</sup>

### **Sidle Panel**

General Vessey appointed the newly retired Army Major General Winant Sidle to head a panel consisting of military officers, retired journalists and representatives from journalism schools to suggest a workable suggestion for granting media access to

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<sup>1</sup> Wilcox. 47.

<sup>2</sup> Combelles-Siegel. 8.

<sup>3</sup> Combelles-Siegel. 8.

<sup>4</sup> Cassell. 945.

<sup>5</sup> Middleton. 37.

military operations.<sup>1</sup> It is important to note that active members of news organizations declined to participate in the panel, although they did provide testimony, because they considered it inappropriate to serve on a government body.<sup>2</sup>

General Vessey asked the Sidle Panel to answer the following question: "How do we conduct military operations in a manner that safeguards the lives of our military and protects the security of the operations while keeping the American public informed through the media?"<sup>3</sup> With this question, the premise that a media presence at military operations was deemed essential. Combelles-Siegel noted that "this change of focus shifted the debate from how to make information available, to the question of how to accommodate press presence. Today, the debate is still framed in those terms."<sup>4</sup>

The Sidle Panel hearings were held in February 1984, with the public announcement of its recommendations following in August. The report's opening *Statement of Principles* declared:

The American people must be informed about United States military operations and this information can best be provided through both the news media and the Government. Therefore, the panel believes it is essential that the U.S. news media cover U.S. military operations to the maximum degree possible consistent with the mission security and the safety of U.S. forces.<sup>5</sup>

The primary recommendations made to ensure this would occur in future operations were:

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<sup>1</sup> Braestrup, 5; Wilcox, 47.

<sup>2</sup> Braestrup, 5.

<sup>3</sup> Combelles-Siegel, 9.

<sup>4</sup> Combelles-Siegel, 9.

<sup>5</sup> Brown, 12; Cassell, 945.

1. Public Affairs planning should begin as soon as operational planning begins.
2. When it appears that news media pooling is the only way of granting access to the early phase of an operation, a pool should be used until full coverage is possible.
3. The Secretary of Defense should study the possibility of a pre-established and constantly updated accreditation list of correspondents in case of a military operation for which a pool is required.
4. The basic principle governing media access should be compliance with pre-determined ground rules issued by the military.
5. Public Affairs should plan for adequate logistical support, including communications and transport.<sup>1</sup>

The initial media response to the panel's recommendations were favorable.

Many journalists expressed support for the implementation of a pool as a reasonable compromise that permitted early access to limited battles, while solving the logistical nightmare of having too many reporters in a small combat zone.<sup>2</sup> Most of the major news organizations expressed little concern about how the pool structure would operate and assumed it would dissolve soon after warfighting began.<sup>3</sup> However, acceptance of the report was not necessarily universal.<sup>4</sup>

As Steger noted, some journalists complained that several sections of the report were "vague and indeterminate, noting they were subject to later

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<sup>1</sup> Combelles-Siegel. 9-10.

<sup>2</sup> Cassell. 946; Steger. 970.

<sup>3</sup> Peter Schmeisser, "Shooting Pool." New Republic. 204 (March 18, 1991) 21.

<sup>4</sup> Cassell. 946; Steger. 970.

implementation.”<sup>1</sup> Some media representatives argued that the recommendations allowed the military to keep its options open, allowing them to impose new rules at any time on control of access and censorship.<sup>2</sup> The most critical voice came from *Time* magazine’s Washington bureau, “where editors were leery of getting permission to cover events that had been open to journalists before Grenada.”<sup>3</sup> *Time* wanted to boycott the proposed pool arrangement, but could not generate a consensus among members of other Washington media bureaus who replied with: “We support you in principle, but we can’t afford to get left behind once the shooting starts.”<sup>4</sup> With that in mind, *Time* reluctantly gave its support to the pool proposal.

**DoD National Media Pool.** Controversy over the recommendations erupted again in October 1984 when proposals implementing the suggestions were released. The plan called for the formation of a Department of Defense National Media Pool (DODNMP) consisting of eleven people -- “two news agency reporters, four television reporters plus a camera operator and a sound technician, a still photographer, and a magazine writer.”<sup>5</sup> After a vocal protest by newspaper organizations, a newspaper reporter was added to the pool.<sup>6</sup>

The idea behind the DODNMP is that:

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<sup>1</sup> Steger, 970.

<sup>2</sup> Steger, 970.

<sup>3</sup> Schmeisser, 22.

<sup>4</sup> Schmeisser, 22.

<sup>5</sup> Cassell, 947.

<sup>6</sup> Cassell, 947.

This group of reporters can be secretly called out to join U.S. forces shortly before they become involved in hostilities abroad. In this way, the secrecy of U.S. operations, which can be vital to the success of the operation and the prevention of unnecessary U.S. casualties, can be protected while the role of the independent media is preserved.<sup>1</sup>

The DODNMP is supposed to function according to the following guidelines:

- It is a noncompetitive pool. News organizations participating in the pool agree to share all information and products with the rest of the media industry.
- Reporters must obey escorts' orders. They cannot break away from the pool.
- They cannot directly communicate with their organizations and can only file via military equipment.
- They must follow ground rules and guidelines.
- They are subject to security review.
- They are expected to ask for media opportunities.<sup>2</sup>

As Fox noted, the priority given to broadcast journalists in the Pentagon pooling arrangement showed the increasing importance of television, at least in the minds of those in the military establishment. The panel stated that "TV pool representatives must have high priority." No other medium was accorded such preferential treatment.<sup>3</sup> During the panel discussions, the question of the potential threat to operational security should media-owned satellite uplinks advance far enough to facilitate real-time or near real-time processing was raised. However, the panel was

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<sup>1</sup> Brown, 13.

<sup>2</sup> Combelles-Siegel, 10.

<sup>3</sup> Fox, 13.

assured that such capability was a long way off.<sup>1</sup> The resultant policy only addressed television in terms of a filming and processing procedure which required 24 to 48 hours to hit the air. The recommendations did not address security concerns created by live real-time transmission.<sup>2</sup> Because procedures to deal with such a capability were not developed, it ensured a future crisis would require new standards and guidelines.

### *Pentagon Pool in Action*

After its inception, the DODNMP was activated 10 times for a variety of exercises and deployments, according to Brown.<sup>3</sup> The media accompanied the military during several military operations, including:

The Persian Gulf escort operations in April 1987 and the deployment of portions of the 82nd Airborne and 7th Infantry divisions to Honduras in March of 1988 in response to Nicaraguan forces' crossing into Honduras.<sup>4</sup>

According to Combelles-Siegel, the initial tests of the pools led to mixed results. For example, when the pool was called-up for an exercise entitled *Universal Trek*, an amphibious landing and simulated assault against guerrilla forces, "word leaked within hours after the pool's activation."<sup>5</sup> There were logistical problems during the exercise, as well.

The military did not have adequate communication facilities to file pool products back to Washington in a timely manner, and reporters had to wait two days to file their copy. During later exercises, the military established a routine that enabled three 600-word messages to be transmitted within two

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<sup>1</sup> Fox, 13.

<sup>2</sup> Fox, 13.

<sup>3</sup> Brown, 13.

<sup>4</sup> Brown, 13.

<sup>5</sup> Combelles-Siegel, 10-11.

hours of the pool's arrival. However, this arrangement proved too limited for actual operations.<sup>1</sup>

A more successful employment of the DODNMP occurred during the military operation *Earnest Will* in 1987-88, a Persian Gulf escort mission. The U.S. wanted the Navy to register Kuwaiti tankers under the U.S. flag and escort them the Strait of Hormuz to Kuwait. "The goal was to protect the freedom of the seas by deterring Iran from attacking non-belligerents' tankers in the Persian Gulf and deter further Soviet involvement in the region," according to Combelles-Siegel.<sup>2</sup>

The Secretary of Defense activated the DODNMP to cover the first escort mission, despite of the reluctance of the commander in charge of the operation. And when the *Bridgeton*, one of the two Kuwaiti ships being escorted, hit a mine, "the first account to arrive at the Pentagon was Associated Press reporter Richard Pyle's. The arrangement was a resounding success," according to Pentagon spokesman Fred Hoffman.<sup>3</sup> Regional pools were regularly allowed access to Navy ships from that moment on, according to Combelles-Siegel.<sup>4</sup>

### OPERATION JUST CAUSE

The first major test of the Sidle recommendations and the DODNMP occurred when the U.S. invaded Panama on December 20, 1989.<sup>5</sup> The test proved to be a

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<sup>1</sup> Combelles-Siegel, 11.

<sup>2</sup> Combelles-Siegel, 11.

<sup>3</sup> Fred Hoffman qtd in Combelles-Siegel, 11.

<sup>4</sup> Combelles-Siegel, 11.

<sup>5</sup> Steger, 971.

failure as Pentagon officials made numerous missteps which prevented the media from adequately covering the operation.<sup>1</sup> The first problem occurred when bureaucrats omitted planning for media coverage, as in the previous Grenada crisis. According to Combelles, "a series of bureaucratic hurdles and misinformed decisions prevented adequate planning for the pool."<sup>2</sup> Apparently, Southern Command's (SouthCom) initial planning for Operation Just Cause did include provisions for media coverage. SouthCom public affairs director Colonel Ronald T. Sconyers had sent a media plan to DoD prior to November 27, 1989. Once the document reached the Pentagon, it was sent out to other organizations for coordination. Upon receipt of the media plan, the Inter-American Affairs Office (IAAO), an office outside the public affairs channels, intervened and put a halt to the planning process for media coverage. "At no time did anyone make Pete Williams, or Colonel William Smullen, special assistant to the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff for PA aware of the stoppage of media planning," according to Combelles.<sup>3</sup> In some people's eyes, the second misstep occurred when Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney refused to allow the military to form a pool of journalists already based in Panama to cover the initial fighting instead of activating the DODNMP in the first place, as SouthCom public affairs officers had wanted.<sup>4</sup> As Sconyers noted in his after-action report, "The DoD media pool was unnecessary

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<sup>1</sup> Sharkey, 93.

<sup>2</sup> Combelles, 79.

<sup>3</sup> Combelles, 79.

<sup>4</sup> Sharkey, 93; Steger, 971.

because of sufficient resident press.”<sup>1</sup> Cheney and Pentagon spokesman Pete Williams chose to use the DODNMP because “we were accustomed to it and” and pool members “knew the ground rules.” Cheney later said he decided to use the pool because “he had a desire to avoid being criticized for not using it.”<sup>2</sup>

The third misstep occurred when Cheney delayed activating the pool, which prevented journalists from gaining access to the operation during the first critical hours. According to Pascale M. Combelles in a *Military Review* article entitled, “Operation Just Cause: A Military-Media Fiasco,” Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs Peter Alexandrakos started the notification process for the pool on December 19, 1989 at 7:30 p.m. Members of the media pool gathered at Andrews AFB, Maryland and departed on military aircraft at 11:30 p.m. The pool arrived at Howard AFB, Panama the next day at 5 a.m. -- four hours after the fighting began.<sup>3</sup>

Once there the pool members were transported to Fort Clayton, Joint Task Force (JTF) South Headquarters, where they “were forced to rely on CNN [for information and received a briefing] from a U.S. embassy official who knew nothing about the military situation.”<sup>4</sup> The embassy official provided the media with a “lecture on the history of Panama, from its founding in 1903.”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Sharkey, 93.

<sup>2</sup> Sharkey, 93.

<sup>3</sup> Combelles, 77.

<sup>4</sup> William Boot. “Wading Around in the Panama Pool,” *Columbia Journalism Review*, (May/April 1990) 18.

<sup>5</sup> Boot, 18.

Following the embassy briefings, the pool members were denied access to the war zone because the military refused to transport them to Panama City where most of the fighting occurred. Instead, the pool members were moved to Fort Amador to interview soldiers who had already seen combat.<sup>1</sup> Additional requests for access to the war zone nearby were denied by the military for safety reasons. As NBC's Fred Francis recalled:

Less than two miles away, the pool could see the area around Noriega's headquarters in full blaze. Loudspeakers were blaring at Noriega loyalists to surrender. A tank was pounding away. We told our escorts that was where we needed to be. We were told 'It is too dangerous.'<sup>2</sup>

Much to the chagrin of the media, the military transported them back to Howard AFB to cover the arrival of additional troops and, later, to Tocumen International Airport, the site of one of the military's major objectives. However, this occurred after the fighting was over.<sup>3</sup> As Francis noted, "Instead of being part of a military operation, we were brought in afterwards to view the spoils."<sup>4</sup>

However, once the reporters got into the field they encountered additional problems, according to Jacqueline Sharkey, author of Under Fire.

Commanders in the field had not been briefed about the journalists' arrival or the public affairs policies. Some refused to talk to journalists; others said they had been ordered not to. Reporters initially were not allowed to talk to wounded GIs, while photographers were told not to take pictures of damaged helicopters or the closed caskets of U.S. soldiers who had died in combat.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Combelles, 77.

<sup>2</sup> Fred Francis qtd in Boot, 18.

<sup>3</sup> Combelles, 78.

<sup>4</sup> Combelles, 78.

<sup>5</sup> Sharkey, 94.

Additionally, the JIB was not adequately equipped with phones, faxes and other supplies. For example, Kathy Lewis of the *Houston Post* and Army Captain Barbara Summers described repeated attempts to transmit stories as a "nightmare."<sup>1</sup> Even though the two were thousands of miles apart -- Lewis in the Panama JIB and Summers at the Pentagon -- they were both referring to the same thing: fax machines set up to send and receive copy that frequently malfunctioned rendering copy "incomprehensible."<sup>2</sup> Photographers found the process of transmitting photographs over the phones "painfully slow."<sup>3</sup> Reuters photographer Tim Aubrey estimated it took 10 hours to send six to eight photographs when it should have only taken approximately 10 minutes for each.<sup>4</sup>

SouthCom public affairs officers did make an attempt to obtain alternate facilities, but was unable to do so. According to Sharkey, the situation was exacerbated when "pressure from Washington" to allow more media representatives into Panama forced SouthCom into letting charter planes filled with journalists to land at Howard AFB. "More than 300 newsmen and newswomen flew in on December 21 and 22, only to be confined to military facilities because SouthComm officials thought the sporadic, ongoing fighting made it too dangerous for journalists to leave."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Sharkey. 94.

<sup>2</sup> Fred Hoffman, Review of the Panama Pool Deployment, (1989) 14.

<sup>3</sup> Hoffman. 15.

<sup>4</sup> Hoffman. 15.

<sup>5</sup> Sharkey. 95.

Journalists who had covered previous conflicts were outraged by this notion. Meanwhile, according to a SouthCom after-action report, the JIB “could not logistically or administratively support such a [large] group..and they were unable to provide sufficient food or housing for the journalists, some of whom slept on the floor.”<sup>1</sup>

Because of the access restrictions, the media were more reliant on the military for information in briefings presented in Panama and Washington. However, it wasn’t until months later that the extent the “briefings gave a false, overly positive view of events in the field” came to light.<sup>2</sup> For example, Lieutenant General Thomas Kelly, director of operations for the Joint Staff, told reporters there had been no friendly fire deaths in Panama. This assertion was repeated over and over by the White House and the DoD. However, six months later *Newsweek* published an investigative article in June 1990 that stated more than a dozen military members had been killed by friendly fire.<sup>3</sup> Additionally, it was later revealed that the Pentagon had overstated the success of the F-117 Stealth during its first combat mission and inflated the number of military casualties, while downplaying the numbers of civilians killed during the conflict.<sup>4</sup>

However, it should be noted that the media made one major misstep at the onset of this operation too. Upon notification of activation of the DODNMP, two

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<sup>1</sup> Sharkey, 95.

<sup>2</sup> Sharkey, 95.

<sup>3</sup> Sharkey, 96.

<sup>4</sup> Sharkey, 98-99.

*Time* magazine staff members breached security guidelines by openly discussing who would be going on the Panama press pool during a Christmas party.<sup>1</sup> However, Stanley Cloud, *Time* bureau chief, said there was no breach of security because “staffers who learned of the pool call-up did not tell anyone else and because rumors of a move against Panama were already buzzing in Washington.”<sup>2</sup> But, this incident enhanced the military’s concerns about the ability of the media to maintain operational security.

### **Hoffman Panel**

In the aftermath of the Panama debacle, Williams charged Fred S. Hoffman, a former Associated Press reporter and a Reagan-appointed DoD spokesman, with the responsibility of reviewing the actions which took place during Operation Just Cause. Hoffman found that exclusion of the media was a logistical oversight and not intentional.<sup>3</sup> (See Appendix C.) However, he made 17 recommendations, arguing that the Pentagon exercise less control over the media, remove obstacles to military operations reporting, and stress the need for independent [as opposed to pool] coverage of such operations.<sup>4</sup> Hoffman called on Williams to “weigh in aggressively with Cheney and General Colin Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, if ‘secrecy or other obstacles’ blocked dispatches from combat.”<sup>5</sup> However, like Grenada, leaders

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<sup>1</sup> Brown. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Boot, 19.

<sup>3</sup> Sharkey. 93.

<sup>4</sup> Steger. 972.

<sup>5</sup> Schmeisser. 22.

in the press corps failed to follow up and ensure that the DoD's own recommendations were implemented, leading to a face-off in the Desert.

### **PERSIAN GULF WAR**

On Aug. 2, 1990, Iraqi forces invaded the tiny nation of Kuwait, setting the stage for a United States and allied intervention leading to America's largest military operation since the Vietnam War. Desert Shield, and later Dessert Storm, also marked the first major conflict, outside of the Panama invasion, to test the DoD National Media Pool and the other recommendations of the Sidle and Hoffman panels.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately for the American media, the test proved to be primarily a failure.

After Saddam Hussein's forces invaded Kuwait, the United States responded in kind by imposing economic sanctions against Iraq. Four days later, after consultation with Saudi-ruler King Fahd, a U.S. ally, President George Bush ordered the deployment of U.S. troops to Saudi Arabia for Operation Desert Shield.<sup>2</sup> Bush declared the operation was a "wholly defensive" role,<sup>3</sup> however, he did not rule out other options. The following day, U.S. troops left for Saudi Arabia *without* the accompaniment of any American journalists. The DoD attributed the situation to Saudi Arabia's "reluctance to admit reporters."<sup>4</sup> The U.S. media "expressed frustration

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<sup>1</sup> Wilcox 42.

<sup>2</sup> Sharkey. 107.

<sup>3</sup> George Bush qtd in Sharkey, 107.

<sup>4</sup> Alex S. Jones, "New Organizations Angry at the Lack of a Press Pool." New York Times. (Aug. 10, 1990) A10.

and dismay”<sup>1</sup> that another military deployment was taking place without journalists accompanying troops. Michael Wines of the *New York Times* wrote:

For the second time in eight months, American troops today headed into a foreign military operation without the special contingent of reporters and photographers that the Pentagon has pledged to summon when United States forces are sent abroad.<sup>2</sup>

However, Bush was not disturbed by the absence of media, for he had questioned the ability of members of the DoD National Media Pool to protect operational security before the deployment of troops to Panama. Of the current situation Bush remarked, “I’m glad that...many forces could be moved with not too much advance warning to Iraq, and with not too much... risk to Saudi Arabia or to these troops.”<sup>3</sup> Besides, Bush said there were “plenty of reporters in Saudi Arabia right now.”<sup>4</sup> However, this was untrue, because at the time “there were no Western reporters in the country.”<sup>5</sup>

During a Defense Department briefing, Assistant Secretary of Defense Pete Williams was asked why the DODNMP had not been activated. Williams replied that he didn’t think there was a need for it because “We are not going in there the same way we went into Panama.”<sup>6</sup> He said this military operation did not involve combat or

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<sup>1</sup> Jones, A10.

<sup>2</sup> Michael Wines qtd in Sharkey, 108.

<sup>3</sup> Bush qtd in Sharkey, 108.

<sup>4</sup> Jones, A10.

<sup>5</sup> Jones, A10.

<sup>6</sup> Pete Williams qtd in Sharkey, 108.

the need to protect operational secrecy -- two "essential elements" that necessitates activation of the media pool.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, Williams said the Saudi government was reluctant to allow access to U.S. journalists and they were trying to convince them to do so.

Critics railed at the Pentagon for its policy of exclusion. *Los Angeles Times* Washinton Bureau chief Jack Nelson stated in an Aug. 9, 1990 *Washington Post* article:

I don't buy [the Defense Department's] rationale, just as I don't buy the rationale that they didn't mean to lock up our pool in Panama. It was carefully orchestrated by the Defense Department to keep us from getting in and reporting the realities of what happened there. They made a big thing after Panama saying they would correct it and they haven't.<sup>2</sup>

Pentagon spokesman Fred Hoffman, author of the Panama after-action report, was also critical of the DoD's actions. He told the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee in February 1991:

In my view, the national media pool should have been sent to Saudi Arabia with the first deploying U.S. troops last August. But it wasn't...The circumstances for using the pool were just right then -- U.S. troops were moving into a remote area: there were few, if any, American news personnel on the ground in Saudi Arabia at the time and there was the potential for fighting.<sup>3</sup>

While the Saudis studied whether to grant visas, "they agreed to accept a small number of reporters if the U.S. military could get them in."<sup>4</sup> On August 12, the

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<sup>1</sup> Williams qtd in Sharkey, 108.

<sup>2</sup> Jack Nelson qtd in Sharkey, 109.

<sup>3</sup> Hoffman qtd in Sharkey, 109.

<sup>4</sup> Pete Williams, "View From the Pentagon." *Washington Post*, (March 17, 1991) D4.

DODNMP was activated with 17 members deploying to Saudi Arabia. The pool was accompanied by six Public Affairs officers, led by Navy Captain Mike Sherman, who was tasked with setting up a Joint Information Bureau in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia.<sup>1</sup> The make-shift operation established by the PAOs consisted of computers he borrowed from the Dhahran Internation Hotel, site of the JIB, and a fax and copier borrowed from other military units.<sup>2</sup> The JIB was ill-equipped to handle the pending influx of media representatives. However, Captain Sherman and the other PAOS managed to work out a process of accreditation for the media, which included an agreement to abide by certain ground rules.

Despite the shortcomings of the initial public affairs infrastructure, it appeared to be an amenable arrangement for those in the media. As *Time* magazine's Jay Peterzell stated:

The pool did give U.S. journalists a way of getting into Saudi Arabia and seeing at least a part of what was going on at a time when there was no other way of doing either of those things.<sup>3</sup>

However, access was an issue during the early days of Operation Desert Shield. As Sharkey noted, "pool members never were granted access to crews of F-117s or B-52s."<sup>4</sup> Additionally, requests to board an AWACS aircraft were repeatedly denied before the Air Force relented and allowed journalists to do the story.<sup>5</sup> Two

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<sup>1</sup> Schmeisser, 22.

<sup>2</sup> Sharkey, 110.

<sup>3</sup> Jay Peterzell qtd in Brown, 15.

<sup>4</sup> Sharkey, 110.

<sup>5</sup> Sharkey, 110.

weeks after entering Saudi Arabia, the DODNMP was dissolved and replaced by 20 smaller pools, composed of approximately 200 reporters, dispersed to units of all services.<sup>1</sup>

In the October of 1990, Bush announced his intentions to move the U.S. from a defensive posture to an offensive posture. Once that occurred, media representatives and Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs Pete Williams met to work out arrangements for access once the fighting began. The DoD wanted "a plan that would allow reporters to cover combat while maintaining operational security necessary to ensure tactical surprise and save American lives."<sup>2</sup> Among other things, the media wanted to scale down the censorship apparatus -- security reviews and military escorts. Their attempts failed, and a discussion over gaining free access "degenerated into a haggle over logistics. More visas were needed, and a guarantee of military transportation if fighting erupted in the region and commercial flights got canceled."<sup>3</sup>

During the next meeting, the *Washington Post*'s Michael Getler told Williams that journalists sensed "another Grenada and Panama in the works" and that "plans for combat coverage of war...were 'gravely off-track.'"<sup>4</sup> They were right. During the course of several meetings, Williams presented the media with several drafts of ground rules. Early draft plans divided the war into three phases.<sup>5</sup> According to Sharkey:

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<sup>1</sup> Fox, 14

<sup>2</sup> Williams, D4.

<sup>3</sup> Schmeisser, 23.

<sup>4</sup> Schmeisser, 23.

<sup>5</sup> Schmeisser, 23.

Phase I, which would begin immediately, would involve two pools that would be formed by the Dhahran JIB from media personnel already in Saudi Arabia on trial deployments at least once every two weeks so journalists could 'familiarize themselves with troops and equipment, cover activities in the areas to which the pools are sent, and exercise their ability to file news stories from the field.'

Phase II would involve deploying the two pools when hostilities were imminent, so they would be in place to cover the first stages of combat. If it were not feasible to move the pools into the field, they would be taken to forward positions as quickly as conditions permitted. Additional pools would be deployed 'as soon as possible' to expand coverage. The size of the new pools 'will be determined by the availability of transportation and other operational factors.' All pool material would undergo security review by military escorts in the field before being transmitted to Dhahran.

Phase III would begin 'when open and independent coverage is possible and would provide for unilateral coverage of activities. The pools would be disbanded and all media would operate independently, although under U.S. Central Command escort.'<sup>1</sup>

As Peter Schmeisser noted in his article "Shooting Pool," the "third phase was where the Pentagon's system had failed in Panama."<sup>2</sup> However, by the time final draft came back from Central Command, "all mention of a third phase had vanished."<sup>3</sup>

Media representatives were outraged at the restrictive ground rules. In defense of policy, Williams stated during an interview with *Good Morning America* that the

Combat pools in the Gulf were an 'extension' of the DoD National Media Pool, and were necessary in part because of the 'enormous number of reporters' who were in Dhahran waiting to see whether hostilities would occur.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Sharkey, 117-118.

<sup>2</sup> Schmeisser, 23.

<sup>3</sup> Schmeisser, 23.

<sup>4</sup> Sharkey, 123.

Once war became imminent, preparations began for wartime coverage. By early January, 60 journalists had already been part of trial deployment of seven combat media pools, as outlined in Phase I of Williams' plan.<sup>1</sup> By January 15, "more than 70 journalists in eight pools had been sent into the field."<sup>2</sup> The next day, Operation Desert Storm began as the U.S. and its allies began the initial air bombardments of Baghdad.

Soon thereafter, complaints about the ground rules flooded in to the Dhahran JIB and the Pentagon. The issues of censorship (what the military termed "security review") and access by pools became major complaints.<sup>3</sup>

Security review forced "reporters to turn their stories into their military minders in the field for review and transmission back to the military press headquarters in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia."<sup>4</sup> This gave the military extraordinary control over copy and the "power to delay transmission of news for unspecified amounts of time."<sup>5</sup> However, as Getler pointed out, the complaints weren't really about censorship, but about "many instances of foolish military attempts to delete material that had nothing to do with real security -- earthy language or embarrassing scenes."<sup>6</sup> Promises of better access to the front after the start of the ground war never materialized.<sup>7</sup> As Combelles-Siegel noted:

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<sup>1</sup> Sharkey, 126.

<sup>2</sup> Sharkey, 126.

<sup>3</sup> Sharkey, 127.

<sup>4</sup> Michael Getler, "View From the Newsroom," Washington Post, (March 17, 1991) D4.

<sup>5</sup> Getler, D4.

<sup>6</sup> Getler, D4.

<sup>7</sup> Schmeisser, 23.

Only about 10 percent of the reporters enrolled on the Joint Information Bureau rosters in Dhahran, Riyadh and Jubail ever made it to the front lines. Moreover, those few 'elected' members of the press did not choose what they wanted to cover, but the military put them where slots were available...Reporters were assigned to units they did not want to cover and missed opportunities they would have liked to cover.<sup>1</sup>

Brown stated that one of the major problems with the military's plan is that it failed "to grant free access to the media where security was not a concern."<sup>2</sup> Further expanding on his point, he said:

While the pool system has been used very successfully to provide key coverage of events that would go uncovered if it were not for the military transporting pools to the appropriate location at the correct time, the control of access in *all* areas creates the impression that the military has something to hide. Worse, it in fact creates the ability to manipulate the story in a way that could prevent the American people from learning what is going on in the military theater of operations.<sup>3</sup>

Part of the problem had to do with limitations on resources. After the onset of war, the JIBs were overwhelmed by correspondents and photographers. One senior-ranking public affairs officer noted that his JIB was undermanned to handle the media requirements. However, many media representatives believed the Pentagon just did not want to provide the "resources and personnel to enable the media to provide large-scale, independent coverage."<sup>4</sup> They believed the pools, which were originally supposed to be a stop-gap measure until the logistics of independent coverage was

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<sup>1</sup> Combelles-Siegel, 13.

<sup>2</sup> Brown, 16.

<sup>3</sup> Brown, 16.

<sup>4</sup> Sharkey, 128.

achieved, became a tool to limit the number of reporters in Saudi and control where they went.<sup>1</sup>

Brown stated that a "lack of dedicated transport and logistic support for filing pool reports"<sup>2</sup> was another major problem with the Pentagon's media plan. During the ground war, "the military relied on a 'pony-express' system for communicating the pool products back from the battlefield."<sup>3</sup> The pool products were supposed to be sent by military transport, but this proved to be unreliable as some correspondents' material took up to 36 days to make it back, if it made it back at all.<sup>4</sup> As Major General Paul E. Funk stated in "Accommodating the Wartime Media: A Commander's Task," he's not sure the military "thoroughly thought through the implication of fighting in the desert while also providing support to the media."<sup>5</sup> He said, "None of us, including the media, considered the great distances involved in getting the media to the locations needed to file their stories."<sup>6</sup>

**Technology and Media Coverage.** "High tech media coverage of the war in the Persian Gulf was just as revolutionary as the smart bombs and the electronically controlled air battles," according to John R. Whiting in his article "WAR -- Live!"<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Steger, 974.

<sup>2</sup> Brown, 16.

<sup>3</sup> Combelles-Siegel, 14.

<sup>4</sup> Combelles-Siegel, 14.

<sup>5</sup> Major General Paul E. Funk, U.S. Army (Ret.), "Acommodating the Wartime Media: A Commander's Task," Military Review, (April 1993) 78.

<sup>6</sup> Funk, 78.

<sup>7</sup> John R. Whiting, "War -- Live!" Proceedings, (August 1991) 64.

Linda Jo Calloway, author of "High Tech Comes To War Coverage: Uses of Information and Communication Technology for Television Coverage in the Gulf War," media use of technologies based on "current advances in voice communications, for example, Fax, personal computer communications, and electronic news gathering via satellite,"<sup>1</sup> had evolved rapidly in the years following the Grenada Conflict. And by the end of Desert Storm, "use of these information and communications technology had matured."<sup>2</sup> Calloway stated that "Gulf War television coverage relied on video, telephone, computer technologies, and radio."<sup>3</sup>

What was viewed as new or emerging technologies was, in reality, new uses of existing technologies in real-time combat conditions by the media during the Persian Gulf War, according to Calloway.<sup>4</sup> Peter J. Brown, author of "The DoD and the Flyaway Dish," stated that the proliferation of flyaway mobile satellite uplinks and satellite-based phone systems, added new complications to the media-military relationship.<sup>5</sup> The new technologies and new uses of old technology "contributed to the spread of instantaneous worldwide communications,"<sup>6</sup> feeding "real-time

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<sup>1</sup> Linda Jo Calloway, "High Tech Comes to War Coverage: Uses of Information and Communications Technology for Television Coverage in the Gulf War," Thomas A. McCain and Leonard Shyles (eds) The 1,000 Hour War: Communication in the Gulf. (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1994) 55-72.

<sup>2</sup> Calloway, 55.

<sup>3</sup> Calloway, 55.

<sup>4</sup> Calloway, 56.

<sup>5</sup> Peter J. Brown, "The DoD and the Flyaway Dish," Proceedings. (August 1991) 62.

<sup>6</sup> Charles McClain, Jr. and Garry Levin, "Public Affairs in America's 21st Century Army," Military Review. (November 1994) 6.

intelligence to both sides of the Gulf Conflict.”<sup>1</sup> According to Charles McClain, Jr. and Garry Levin, authors of “Public Affairs in America’s 21st Century Army,” “the media’s ability to provide detailed, graphic and live coverage of events”<sup>2</sup> influenced the way the military carried out military operations in the Gulf, and the way operations will be handled in the future.

It compresses time and space so that what happens on the ground immediately impacts on the strategic decision making. Bridging the gap between strategic and tactical levels, it is causing strategic decisions to affect tactical execution almost instantly. The media’s expanding capability is making it possible for a tactical victory to be an operational or strategic loss -- and vice versa.<sup>3</sup>

According to Brown, the “press [was] captivated by its ability to generate live images instantly.”<sup>4</sup> He stated that this “bred awkward presentations, too often awash in hypothesis. Live coverage was excessive, and often it offered no concrete information.”<sup>5</sup> Even broadcast news icon, Walter Conkrite, questioned the need for “the network’s excessive appetite for live feeds.”<sup>6</sup>

That is exactly what differentiated the Gulf War from other conflicts: “The abundance of live coverage, the speed of transmission, and the volume of information that no single viewer could ever hope to comprehend.”<sup>7</sup> And as Calloway inferred,

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<sup>1</sup> Calloway, 56.

<sup>2</sup> McClain and Levin, 7.

<sup>3</sup> McClain and Levin, 7.

<sup>4</sup> Brown, 62.

<sup>5</sup> Brown, 62.

<sup>6</sup> Brown, 63.

<sup>7</sup> Brown, 63.

“the enemy could intercept this very same real-time flow of information using downlinks in several locations.”<sup>1</sup>

As technology becomes more smaller and lighter, Brown predicts an exacerbation of intrusive television coverage of military operations,<sup>2</sup> intensifying military concerns about operational security.

**Information Void.** During the Gulf War, television’s voracious appetite for non-stop coverage, the limited access, and a multitude of other restrictions, media representatives were left at the mercy of official briefers who were eager to fill the information void.<sup>3</sup> The military engaged in a sleek public relations campaign that included “direct briefings, complete with updated statistics and video footage...[that] cultivated public opinion by bypassing the traditional media filter.”<sup>4</sup> As Getler noted, “the ground war...was described primarily by military briefers...which is what the Pentagon wanted all along; for them, not the pools or the press, to control the flow of news.”<sup>5</sup>

Adding to the problem was the inexperience of many of the journalists who were sent over to cover the war. Many news organizations that normally would not cover such an event, such as *Mirabella*, dispatched journalists unfamiliar with the military, technology, and history, making those reporters even more reliant on

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<sup>1</sup> Brown, 63.

<sup>2</sup> Brown, 63.

<sup>3</sup> Braestrup qtd in Fialka xii

<sup>4</sup> Steger, 976.

<sup>5</sup> Getler, D4.

government officials for information. "Reporters who regularly cover military matters generally know what to ask,"<sup>1</sup> but there were many ill-informed correspondents covering the briefings and in the pools. That lack of knowledge contributed to public misperceptions about issues ranging from technology to tactics. As Patrick O'Heffernan stated in his article "A Mutual Exploitation Model of Media Influence in U.S. Foreign Policy:"

Reporters who were knowledgeable about the Patriot missile systems would not have reported hits when they saw explosions in the sky that later research showed were misses. And news organizations familiar with military tactics and history would have seen in advance the feint General Schwarzkopf was planning when he allowed them to film the practice assaults on the Kuwaiti coast when in fact the main attack was planned over the western Saudi-Iraq border.<sup>2</sup>

Many observers applauded the military for its successful public relations program in the Gulf, however, one group was not quite so enthusiastic. Media organizations severely criticized the P.R. effort as "chilling candid coverage of the war."<sup>3</sup> Because of the press restrictions, several media representatives filed a lawsuit against the U.S. government, but the case was dismissed. The court ruled that:

Since the principles at stake are important and require a delicate balancing, prudence dictates that we leave the definition of the exact parameters of press access to military operations abroad for a later date when a full record is available, in the unfortunate event that there is another military operation.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Getler, D4.

<sup>2</sup> Patrick O'Heffernan, "A Mutual Exploitation Model of Media Influence in U.S. Foreign Policy," in W.L. Bennett and D.L. Paletz (eds.) Taken By Storm, The Media, Public Opinion and U.S. Foreign Policy in the Gulf War (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 244.

<sup>3</sup> Wilcox, 42.

<sup>4</sup> Hedrick Smith, ed., The Media and The Gulf War. (Washington, D.C.:Seven Locks, 1992) 415

Despite the media's dissatisfaction with their treatment during the Persian Gulf War, like Grenada, they were unable to convince the American public that the military's media guidelines were bad for democracy. In fact, polls showed that the public by-and-large favored the press restrictions on the media in the Gulf, and the resultant coverage they provided. In fact, a Newsweek poll showed that "59 percent of Americans [thought] better of the news media [after the conflict] than they did before the war."<sup>1</sup>

### **NEW PRINCIPLES**

The military-media tensions that arose from the restrictions in the Gulf spurred the first attempt to define and negotiate rules governing coverage of military operations, according to Pascale Combelles-Siegel.<sup>2</sup> On April 15, 1991, a working group consisting of 15 Washington bureau chiefs, met to discuss media coverage ground rules during the Persian Gulf War. According to a letter written by the group to the Secretary of Defense, the group stated that "virtually all major news organizations agree that the flow of information to the public was blocked, impeded or diminished by the policies and practices of the Department of Defense."<sup>3</sup> The group was concerned that "the virtual total control [the DoD] exercised over the American press will become a model for the future."<sup>4</sup> (See Appendix H.)

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<sup>1</sup> Williams. D1.

<sup>2</sup> Combelles-Siegel. 18.

<sup>3</sup> Smith. 379.

<sup>4</sup> Smith. 380.

The group appointed five members to serve on a working group to study the issue further. The members included: Michael Getler, *The Washington Post*; Jonathan Wolman, *Associated Press*; George Watson, *ABC News*, later replaced by Barbara Cohen, *CBS News*; Clark Hoyt, *Knight-Ridder Newspapers*; and Stanley Cloud, *Time*. The group issued a report which stated that "the combination of security review and the use of the pool system as a form of censorship made the Gulf War the most undercovered major conflict in modern American history. In a free society, there is simply no place for such overwhelming control by the government."<sup>1</sup>

The unpublished report was forwarded to the Secretary of Defense in June 1991. On September 12 the working group met with him in person to discuss the failures of the public affairs policies in the Gulf and to open negotiations with the Department of Defense.<sup>2</sup> The group spent the next eight months meeting with Williams and his staff in an effort to formulate a new agreement. On May 21, 1992, the Department of Defense announced it had adopted new combat coverage principles.<sup>3</sup> (See Appendix A, 4-1.)

Key points of the new principles included:

1. Open and independent coverage will be the principal means of coverage of U.S. military operations.
2. Pools will be used to ensure coverage of the first stages of any military operation and will be disbanded after 24 to 36 hours.
3. Reporters should be granted access to all major units.

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<sup>1</sup> Combelles-Siegel, 18.

<sup>2</sup> Combelles-Siegel, 19.

<sup>3</sup> Combelles-Siegel, 19.

4. The military should provide transport and communication assistance to the pool as well as to independent reporters.<sup>1</sup>

After the Statement of Principles were published, Williams thought it was necessary to transform the guidelines into a DoD directive and a joint doctrine in order to avoid problems such as those that occurred in the Gulf.<sup>2</sup> Although the directive and the doctrine sound like two separate entities, they are closely related. DoD directives sets the overarching policy, while the joint doctrine provides more detail to inact implementation of the directive. Approximately four years after the process began, the DoD directive was published setting forth the most definitive guidelines yet on media access to combat operations. The joint doctrine is still in draft form.

#### **PROCEDURES FOR JOINT PUBLIC AFFAIRS OPERATIONS**

The new Instruction covering access to operational areas incorporated many of the 1992 Statement of Principles agreed upon by the military and the media. For example, the Instruction states that the primary method of coverage of operations will be "open and independent coverage by properly credentialed news media."<sup>3</sup>

Additionally, the Instruction responds to the criticism heaped on the DoD about the public affairs officers obstructing the reporting process, the new regulation states that: "Reporters are granted access to all unclassified activities, including

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<sup>1</sup> United States. Department of Defense, News Release No. 241-92. Pentagon Adopts Combat Coverage of Principles. 21 May 1992.

<sup>2</sup> Combelles-Siegel, 20.

<sup>3</sup> United States. Department of Defense Instruction 5400.14.4. "Procedures for Joint Public Affairs Operations." (22 Jan 1996) 7. Combelles-Siegel, 20.

combat operations...The goal is to treat the news media as members of units, allowing them to accompany the organizations during the conduct of their missions.”<sup>1</sup> Also, the new Instruction, for all intents and purposes, eliminates the security review procedures used in the Gulf. The policy states that, although “formal security review of products may be necessary, the more usual case shall involve the disciplined practice of ‘security at the source.’ Under that concept, those meeting with the news media shall ensure classified material is not revealed.”<sup>2</sup>

Combelles-Siegel noted that the new Instruction also addresses issues that were not raised by media representatives during the 1992 negotiations, but appeared to be major problems during the Gulf War, primarily the planning process [or lack thereof] and the tasks of various components during this process.<sup>3</sup> The new policy states that “public affairs objectives relies on the coordinated responses of supporting combatant commands, the Military Departments, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and OATSD (PA).” The new Instruction clarifies the roles of the various components involved in this process.<sup>4</sup> As an example, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs must now “review, coordinate, approve and disseminate PAG [public affairs guidance],” and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is responsible for ensuring “that existing operational public affairs plans comply with

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<sup>1</sup> U.S., DoD Instruction 5400.14.4, 4; Combelles-Siegel, 20.

<sup>2</sup> U.S., DoD Instruction 5400.14.4, 7; Combelles-Siegel, 20-21.

<sup>3</sup> Combelles-Siegel, 21.

<sup>4</sup> U.S., DoD Instruction 5400.14.4, 6; Combelles-Siegel, 21.

published joint public affairs doctrine and guidance.”<sup>1</sup> The Commanders of the Unified Combatant Commands have an even more detailed responsibilities. Under this new policy they must “include in operations plans an annex that establishes responsive public affairs organizations and structures and shall provide dedicated personnel, facilities, equipment, transportation, and communications assets to the public affairs mission.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> U.S., DoD Instruction 5400.14.4, 6; Combelles-Siegel, 21.

<sup>2</sup> U.S., DoD Instruction 5400.14.4, 4; Combelles-Siegel, 21.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

#### **Introduction**

In order to assess the effectiveness of the new DoD Instruction, interviews were conducted with two study groups: 1.) media representatives from print and broadcast fields with extensive experience in covering military operations; and 2.) military representatives with various levels of experience, all of whom have participated in various aspects of military operations. By using the two study groups, the researcher was able to judge whether both groups understood key concepts contained in the new Instruction, as well as compare views and perspectives on issues pertaining to media access of military operations. Additionally, by selecting military members of various years of experience in the Public Affairs career, the researcher was able to ascertain whether the more junior officers and enlisted personnel had the same understanding of the policy as the more senior officers. Basically, did the intent of the policy trickle down to the lower levels in the chain of command?

As stated in Chapter I, the research questions for the study are:

1. The new policy states that open and independent coverage and security at the source are the primary goals in allowing media access to military operations. Do military and media representatives define these concepts in the same manner?

2. The new doctrine does not exclude the use of pools. How will this affect the notion of independent and improvisational coverage? Are pools and independent coverage compatible ideas?
3. What are the media and the military's thoughts on the idea of numerical limitations on reporters covering military operations?
4. Does the advent of real-time transmission capability affect public affairs operations? How does this impact operational security concerns?
5. How do multinational operations affect U.S. military media policies? Is access an issue?

### **Research Design**

Interview questions were developed to address each of the research questions, and some questions addressed more than one research area. An interview agenda was designed for each of the study groups. (See Appendices D and E.) The study required separate interview agendas because the experiences of members of the two groups in relation to the research topic differed to some extent. For example, a majority of the members of the media study group have covered Bosnia, Haiti, or Somalia since the Instruction (or the 1992 DoD Principles on which the policy is based) was implemented and can effectively speak to the issue of media access to those operations. Whereas, the military representatives could provide insight in areas ranging from: How to convince a commander to support the idea of open and independent coverage and how well-equipped current Joint Information Bureaus are compared to how the Instruction states they should be operated. Therefore, the two study groups were designed so the findings of one could be compared to the other group, and each group can provide insight where the other group can't.

### **Research Question #1: Clarity of Policy**

The new policy states that open and independent coverage and security at the source are the primary goals in allowing media access to military operations. Do military and media representatives define these concepts in the same manner? The clarity of the policy will also be assessed by assessing how many are aware of the new policy and who have actually seen it.

A multitude of critiques on media-military relations have shown that the lack of understanding among the military and the media toward each other have led to numerous conflicts in the media-military relationship. Therefore, the researcher feels determining if the media and military share the same understanding of such key concepts in the new policy such as open and independent coverage and security at the source is of great import. This determination was made by evaluating responses to the following interview questions:

- The new Instruction states that allowing “open and independent coverage” the primary goal when granting media access to military operations. How do you define open and independent coverage?
- The new policy states that security at the source instead of security review will be the main method of maintaining operational security. How do you define “security at the source?”

A determination of the effectiveness of the ability of military members to ensure commanders of military operations adhere to the policy of “security at the source” and “open and independent coverage” was assessed by responses to the following questions:

- How do military members ensure commanders opt for security at the source instead of security review?
- How will the continued use of pools affect independent and improvisational coverage? Are pools and independent coverage compatible ideas?

Clarity and awareness of the existence of the policy was determined by assessing the responses by the military and media representatives to the following question:

- Are you familiar with the new DoD Instruction, "Procedures for Joint Public Affairs Operations," which, in part, addresses media access to military operations?

### **Research Question #2: Use of Pools**

Although the new doctrine states that open and independent coverage is the primary goal when granting access to military operations, it does not exclude the use of pools. Does this set the media-military relationship on a collision course during future operations? Do the military and media share the same views on the use of pools and how it may impact the desire for independent coverage?

The use of pools was a very contentious issue during and immediately after the Persian Gulf War. With the agreement on the 1992 DoD Principles of News Media Coverage, the media and the military came to an agreement that pools would be used only during specific occasions and with a time limitation of 24- to 36-hours during the beginning of a military operation. The new DoD Instruction states that pools will be used during certain occasions deemed appropriate by military public affairs officers and commanders. In order to assess whether this arrangement appears satisfactory to both the media and the military, responses to the following questions were reviewed:

- The new doctrine does not exclude the use of pools. In fact, it did not retain the 24- to 36-hour time limitation for pools. What are your thoughts on this?
- How will continued use of pools affect independent and improvisational coverage? Are pools and independent coverage compatible ideas?
- It has been said that the military will be forced to resort to pools as the main vehicle for access to military operations unless a numerical limitation (and accreditation system) is placed on reporters. The new policy does not address this issue. What are your thoughts on this? Are members of the military/media interested in pursuing such a policy?

### **Research Question #3: Impact of Emerging Technologies**

Technology has evolved at a rapid pace allowing for real-time transmissions from the battlefield. How has this impacted media coverage and public affairs operations? Should the policy have addressed this issue?

Emerging technologies have always had an impact on policy formulation relative to media access to military operations. However, this issue has never been addressed in a formal manner by either the media or the military. The current DoD Instruction does not provide guidance on how military personnel should deal with media representatives who have the capability of broadcasting live from the battlefield. How emerging technologies have impacted the issue of media access and whether concerns about real-time transmission capability should be addressed in a policy was assessed by military panelists' responses to the following questions.

- The issue of media capability of real-time coverage has cropped up several times since Grenada, but has never been officially addressed (even in the current policy). How has the advent of real-time capability affected public affairs operations?

The media representatives were asked a similar question:

- The issue of media capability of real-time coverage has cropped up several times since Grenada, but has never been officially addressed (even in the current policy). How has the advent of real-time capability affected media coverage of operations?

Both the media and the military study groups were asked:

- What are the implications for the military's operational concerns and media policies?
- Do you think real-time coverage is necessary during times of war?
- Does real-time coverage give citizens an accurate perspective of the overall operation, or does it contribute to sensational reporting?

#### **Research Question #4: Multinational Operations**

How do multinational operations affect U.S. military media policies? Is access an issue? Should media procedures for multinational operations be covered in a formal policy?

U.S. military operations are increasingly multinational in nature, yet the new policy does not address how public affairs officers should handle the differences between allied, and U.N. approaches to media access to operations. An assessment of the issue of media access to military operations in a multinational environment was made by analyzing responses to the following questions:

- Do/should units assigned to U.N./NATO operations follow U.N./NATO guidance or U.S. public affairs guidance?
- What obstacles have you encountered by working in/covering multinational operations?
- Should future policies address this issue in a more definitive manner?

#### **Research Question #5: Joint Information Bureaus**

When media have been denied access to military operations in the past, they have had to rely more heavily on joint information bureaus (JIBs). Oftentimes, these JIBs added to the frustration of trying to cover an operation because they were poorly equipped and because they lacked adequate telephones, faxes, and other essential items. Has the new policy resolved this issue?

An assessment of the current state of joint information bureaus was made by analyzing the responses of members of the military study group to the following question:

- In the past, public affairs officers have complained about a lack of adequate equipment, facilities, and supplies to operate joint information bureaus in a proper manner. The new DoD Instruction addresses this issue. In practice, has this problem been completely resolved? If so, how? If not, why not?

## **Research Procedures**

Telephone interviews were conducted with members of both the media and the military study groups. The interview subjects were selected because of one of the following reasons: 1.) the author encountered the subject's name during research for the study; 2.) the person was recommended by members of the media or military; or 3.) The interviewee was a professional colleague of the researcher. Interviewees were selected based on their experience in covering or participating in military operations. They were not selected based on their anticipated opinions on the issue of media access. The interviews were based on the availability of the subjects and averaged 30 minutes in length. Additionally, three interviewees responded by electronic mail.

### The Study Groups

#### **The Media Study Group**

Members of the media study group were selected because of their experiences in covering military operations. Some members of the group have covered conflicts since the Vietnam War, while others glean their experience from more recent military operations in Bosnia, Haiti and Somalia.

**Frank Aukofer** is the Washington Bureau chief for the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*. Mr. Aukofer, a journalist with 37 years reporting experience, was an original member of the Pentagon press pool and was in the first pool allowed into Saudi Arabia for Operation Desert Shield. He is the co-author of America's Team: The Odd Couple. A Report on the Relationship Between the Media and the Military.

**Malcom W. Browne** is a Pulitzer-prize winning journalist for the *New York Times*. A veteran of the Korean War, Mr. Browne covered Vietnam for seven years (for which he was awarded the Pulitzer), guerrilla wars in South America for three years, and the 1971 India-Pakistan War, as well as the Persian Gulf War in 1991.

**Jim Clancy** is CNN's International Correspondent/Anchor. Mr. Clancy has covered the U.S. military in Bosnia, Beirut (the 1983 Marine bombing), Somalia, Rwanda, Uganda, Italy, Panama and Germany.

**Joseph L. Galloway** is *US News & World Report's* senior writer. Mr. Galloway has more than 32 years of experience covering military operations from Vietnam, to the India-Pakistan War, to the Persian Gulf War. He has also done cover stories on Haiti and Somalia.

**William Headline**, currently a vice president of CNN, is a former Washington bureau chief. Mr. Headline, a Navy veteran, has more than 30 years journalistic experience. He participated in the Sidle Panel deliberations after Grenada and was responsible for running the pool at the beginning of Desert Shield. Mr. Headline has participated in the Haiti pool as well.

**David Martin** is CBS News' national security correspondent. Mr. Martin has covered the Pentagon for sixteen years, first for *Newsweek* and then, in 1983, he transferred to CBS.

**John McWethy** is ABC News' national security correspondent. Mr. McWethy has covered both the Pentagon and the State Department since 1979. Prior to that, he was

*US News & World Report's* chief White House correspondent. Mr. McWethy has covered military operations in Somalia, Bosnia and Liberia.

**Dana Priest** is a Pentagon correspondent for the *Washington Post*. Ms. Priest covered the 1989 invasion of Panama and just recently returned from Bosnia.

**Rick Sallinger** is a news reporter for Denver's KCNC-TV. Mr. Sallinger previously covered military operations in Somalia and in the Persian Gulf for CNN. He also covered Bosnia before the deployment of U.S. military troops to the region.

**Jonathan Wolman** is the Associated Press Washington bureau chief. Mr. Wolman participated in the media working group that negotiated the 1992 DoD Principles of News Media Coverage.

#### **The Military Study Group**

**Lieutenant Colonel Jereon Brown** is the chief of public affairs for the 3rd Wing, Elmendorf AFB, Alaska. Colonel Brown, a 17-year veteran, has participated in military operations in Honduras, Saudi Arabia, Haiti and Rwanda.

**Colonel Mike Gallagher** is the special assistant for public affairs to the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Colonel Gallagher has more than 25 years experience in public affairs, having served as the director of Air Combat Command Public Affairs, U.S. Air Forces in Europe public affairs director, as well as the media relations director for Central Command during Desert Storm.

**Brian Kilgallen** is the plans officer in the Office of the Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs. Mr. Kilgallen, a 25-year Department of Defense veteran, is the author of the current DoD Instruction, "Procedures for Joint Public Affairs Operations."

**Chief Master Sergeant Joe Lavigne** is chief of Air Force Enlisted Public Affairs Assignments. He has 22 years of public affairs experience, having participated in Operations Provide Promise, Deny Flight, and Support Hope.

**Captain James W. Law** is a public affairs officer with more than six years of experience. He has participated in military operations in Germany, Italy, Albania, and Croatia.

**Captain Casey Mahon** is chief of community relations at the Air Force Academy in Colorado. Captain Mahon is a public affairs officer with more than eight years of experience. He was the director of the International Media Center for Desert Shield and Desert Storm in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

**Captain Tracy O'Grady-Walsh** is a public affairs officer with eight years of experience. She is currently chief of public affairs for the 31st Fighter Wing, Aviano AB, Italy, the staging ground for U.S. military deploying into Bosnia.

**Captain John Paradis** is chief of public affairs for the 16th Special Operations Wing, Hurlburt Field, Florida. Captain Paradis is an eight-year veteran, with five years spent in the public affairs career field. He has participated in Operation Deny Flight and Joint Endeavor.

**Colonel Virginia Pribyla** is the chief of media relations for the United States Air Force. Colonel Pribyla has 23 years of public affairs experience. She has served as a media relations officer for U.S. Air Forces in Europe and Air Force Systems Command. She has directed media activities for major military operations including Operations Provide Promise, Support Hope and Deny Flight.

**Colonel Ray B. Shepherd** is director of public affairs for United States Air Forces in Europe. Colonel Shepherd has 19 years of public affairs experience. He has participated in the return of U.S. hostages from Iran, the U.S. peacekeeping mission in Beirut, Operations Desert Shield/Desert Storm and Operation Provide Promise.

**Lieutenant Colonel Bob Williams** is director of public affairs for the Air Force Flight Test Center, Edwards AFB, California. Colonel Williams has 17 years experience in public affairs. He has participated in Operations Provide Comfort, Provide Promise, Joint Endeavor, Support Hope and Deny Flight.

### **Limitations of Research Approaches**

The availability of potential subjects for interview played a role in determining who was selected. For example, Ed Offley, military reporter for the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* has extensive experience covering military operations, but was unavailable for an interview. The same is true for Steve Komarow of *USA Today*, who was recommended by participants in both the media and military study groups. Michael Getler, a former Pentagon correspondent for the *Washington Post* was a key player in the 1992 media-military negotiations. He has since transferred to the Paris bureau of the *International Herald Tribune* and declined to participate in the study. NBC's Pete Williams, who is a former Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs and initiated the new policy, declined to participate in the study. Additionally, Brigadier General Ronald Sconyers, director of Air Force public affairs was unavailable for an interview.

### **Limitations of Research Design**

The scope of the study was limited to the issue of media access and the current DoD Instruction because much research and critique have been carried out on the more general topics of media-military relations and military/government censorship during military operations.

The military study group was limited in its composition of military personnel. The military study group is primarily composed of Air Force military members. This was done because the researcher is an Air Force member and the study is intended to primarily benefit the Air Force public affairs community.

## CHAPTER IV

### FINDINGS

#### Overview

This chapter contains an examination of the findings from the interviews of the military and media study groups. The opinions or ideas of members of the media and military groups are compared to each other and with the stated objectives of the DoD Instruction, "Procedures for Joint Public Affairs Operations." The comments of the interviewees are given equal weight, without regard to rank or stature.

#### Findings

##### Clarity of Policy

The first research question is: The new policy states that open and independent coverage and security at the source are the primary goals when allowing media access to military operations. Do media and military representatives define these concepts in the same manner?

The new policy reads:

Commanders shall ensure that reporters are granted all possible access to all unclassified activities, including combat operations (and) assist news media in gaining access to the full spectrum of U.S. military units and personnel conducting joint and unilateral operations, subject to special operations restrictions. Access includes commanders, staffs, officers and enlisted personnel directly involved with combat and sustainment operations.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> U.S., DoD Instruction, 5400.14.4, 4-5

Although the range of interpretation varied somewhat from "absolute access" to "access within certain security parameters," the military and the media respondents shared the same basic notion of the concept of open and independent coverage -- more access.

Colonel Ray Shepherd, director of public affairs for United States Air Forces in Europe, stated that he interpreted the objective to mean that the military is supposed to "make coverage of military operations (excluding classified operations) available to the media."<sup>1</sup> Shepherd stated that this means the PAO will act as a facilitator in connecting the media with the operation, providing interviews and photo opportunities. "This is done on a non-interference basis, for the media and the military operations. Journalists are free to travel, cover, and interview whomever they desire."<sup>2</sup> He said the interviews are to be conducted with permission of the individual and without interference of the military.

Although the new policy states that "personal safety of the news media is not a reason for excluding them,"<sup>3</sup> Chief Master Sergeant Joe Lavigne felt that safety considerations must be taken into account when granting access. "If I had a reporter with me, I'd take him to every location where, number one, I wouldn't be jeopardizing the safety of my people, and number two, I wouldn't be jeopardizing the safety of the reporter."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Col Ray Shepherd, e-mail response to questions, Feb. 27, 1997.

<sup>2</sup> Shepherd.

<sup>3</sup> U.S., DoD Instruction, 5400.14.4, 8.

<sup>4</sup> CMSgt Joe Lavigne, telephone interview, March 6, 1997.

A couple of military representatives interpreted open and independent coverage to mean embedding the media with military units participating in ongoing combat and/or exercise operations. Captain John Paradis, chief of public affairs for the 16th Special Operations Wing at Hurlburt Field in Florida, stated that "if you have a media representative who wants to go along on a mission, he comes in and goes on the mission with that unit."<sup>1</sup> Paradis said once the journalist is embedded within that unit he has the freedom to talk to anyone he wants.

Colonel Mike Gallagher, special assistant for public affairs to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of staff, believes a distinction must be made between the two types of media when one talks about open and independent coverage. He concurs with Paradis that embedding journalists with units is the optimal way of granting this type of access, but only if they are part of the print media. He said:

A pencil -- somebody who writes -- can stay with a unit for a long, long time and you can embed them in that unit. They get to know the people in the unit. They get to understand the procedures. They actually go out on maneuvers with the unit. Then you have the opposite thing with members of the electronic media, because these people can't afford to stay with one unit very, very long. For example, NBC would send in one or maybe two camera crews into a war zone. They can't have that camera crew held up with one unit. They would want to go to as many different places as they possibly could. You cannot successfully embed electronic media with a unit, just because of the time constraint, the logistic constraints, and the time problem where you can with a pencil.<sup>2</sup>

Therefore, Gallagher believes free and open access means embedding the print media, while taking the electronic media to as many places as is possible.

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<sup>1</sup> Capt John Paradis, telephone interview March 12, 1997.

<sup>2</sup> Col Mike Gallagher, telephone interview, March 12, 1997.

The views expressed by Paradis and Gallagher do concur with the policy objective of treating "the news media as members of units, allowing them to accompany the organizations in the conduct of their missions."<sup>1</sup>

According to Dana Priest, Pentagon correspondent for the *Washington Post*, open and independent coverage means no restrictions on where the media are "where we are permitted to go, what we are permitted to see, who we're permitted to talk to, and what we're permitted to write."<sup>2</sup>

Washington Post Bureau Chief Frank Aukofer believed open and independent coverage means the military welcomes anyone who wants to come and cover a military operation.

If you have a military operation some place and somebody from a news organization or perhaps a freelance writer...wants to come into the theater of operations to cover the war...they [the military] accommodate [them] as best they can. They accommodate them without ...arbitrarily denying access or by trying to exercise any kind of field censorship.<sup>3</sup>

Associated Press Washington Bureau Chief Jonathan Wolman reflected the view of the majority of the media representatives interviewed with his more general definition: "Independent coverage means that news organizations are representing themselves individually, rather than in a pooling arrangement. Open coverage means coverage with sensible restrictions, rather than extraordinary restrictions."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> U.S., DoD Instruction, 5400.14.4. 8.

<sup>2</sup> Dana Priest, telephone interview, March 6, 1997.

<sup>3</sup> Frank Aukofer, telephone interview, March 12, 1997.

<sup>4</sup> Jonathan Wolman, telephone interview, February 28, 1997.

William Headline, vice president of CNN, used the example of Grenada as the antithesis of open and independent coverage. He said that in order to avoid another situation like the Caribbean conflict is "in a free country, in a free society, as quickly as possible, free and open and independent coverage would be allowed"<sup>1</sup> after the initial onset of military operation.

There are those on the media and the military side who believe open and independent coverage as an objective is not written in stone and is subject to variables such as the nature of the operation and the differing attitudes of the services and commanders.

ABC News' John McWethy stated that he believes open and independent coverage depends on "the kind of operation we're talking about. Peacekeeping -- it's a lot easier to give us much more open access; In a more tense combat situation, it's a lot less easy to give us access."<sup>2</sup> Lavigne concurred with McWethy's assessment. He said, "A humanitarian mission that the military's involved in, if you take into consideration open access, open coverage, would differ than if there was hostile activity ongoing where you could possibly jeopardize the safety of your troops if you allow that open access."<sup>3</sup>

The DoD Instruction states the following about security at the source:

While there may be situations when a more formal security review of news media products may be necessary, the more usual case shall involve the disciplined practice of 'security at the source.' Under that concept, those

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<sup>1</sup> William Headline, telephone interview, March 6, 1997.

<sup>2</sup> John McWethy, telephone interview, March 6, 1997.

<sup>3</sup> Lavigne.

meeting with the news media shall ensure that classified information is not revealed. News media agreement to reasonable ground rules for coverage will reinforce, but not replace, individual awareness of sensitive material.<sup>1</sup>

Comprehension of security at the source varied to a greater degree among the media representatives when it came to defining this term. At least one journalist had no idea what the term meant. Nearly half of those questioned believed this to be a security review process requiring their material to be screened at a lower level. For example, one broadcast journalist stated, "You're sitting down, you've written your story, you go over it with a public affairs officer...I could make a mistake and give something away, and it would be their job to prevent that."<sup>2</sup> CNN's Headline interpreted the concept to mean review at the lowest level where a commander can pass judgment on "whether something violates classification or does not...[it's where a] field commander can make the judgment...and not have it bumped upstairs and upstairs and upstairs and upstairs."<sup>3</sup>

Other definitions were closer to the stated policy objective. For example, *US News & World Report's* Joe Galloway said, "I assume that...the people you are covering know enough about their business not to talk about [operational security] to a strange reporter who just pitched in."<sup>4</sup> And Frank Aukofer noted, "You [the military] don't show people things...you don't want reported."<sup>5</sup> A couple of media

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<sup>1</sup> U.S., DoD Instruction, 5400.14.4, 7.

<sup>2</sup> Jim Clancy, telephone interview, March 14, 1997.

<sup>3</sup> Headline.

<sup>4</sup> Joe Galloway, telephone interview, March 8, 1997.

<sup>5</sup> Aukofer.

interviewees said the concept of security at the source entails being given access to classified briefings, but instructed not to reveal the information before a certain time, if at all.<sup>1</sup>

Some military respondents also had some difficulty defining this term, although seven out of the ten provided correct responses. A couple of them viewed security at the source involving a low-level review process. For example, Captain Tracy O'Grady-Walsh, chief of public affairs for the 31st Fighter Wing at Aviano AB, Italy, stated security at the source is "decision making occurring at the lowest level -- in the field [and] at the wing."<sup>2</sup> Lieutenant Colonel Jereon Brown, chief of public affairs at the 3rd Wing, Elmendorf AFB, Alaska, simply said it was a matter of "trust and complete and comprehensive briefing of the rules of engagement."<sup>3</sup>

Other military interviewees' provided definitions closer to the stated policy objective. For example, public affairs officer Captain James Law stated that "the person being interviewed by the media is responsible for knowing the rules about what is and isn't releasable and is accountable for what [is] said."<sup>4</sup> Paradis said security at the source involves "the commander briefing his people on what [operational security]

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<sup>1</sup> David Martin, telephone interview, March 7, 1997; Malcom Browne, telephone interview, March 7, 1997.

<sup>2</sup> Capt. Tracy O'Grady-Walsh, e-mail response to questions, March 12, 1997.

<sup>3</sup> Lt. Col. Jereon Brown, telephone interview, March 14, 1997.

<sup>4</sup> Capt. James Law, e-mail response to questions, March 16, 1997.

requirements are so that they understand what they can and cannot talk to the media about.”<sup>1</sup>

The military members felt the best way to ensure security at the source is used as the primary means of maintaining operational security rather than security review is to have the DoD exert influence from the top on down. Law stated:

Security at the source isn't a bottom-up decision. It's a top-down decision. Department of Defense Public Affairs has to convince people that this is the way it should happen. Then the Secretary of Defense issues a directive to all DoD commanders that this is the policy. This is the only way it will work. Otherwise, only those field public affairs officers who convince their commander to utilize 'security at the source' will do it and there will be no consistency from operation to operation.<sup>2</sup>

O'Grady-Walsh concurred with Law's assessment. She said commanders may consider options recommended to them by their public affairs officers, but "they will opt for it 100 percent of the time when their commander tells them to. So, if the DoD wants 'buy-in' to this, it must come through the chain of command.”<sup>3</sup>

Also, the researcher found that the majority of respondents of both the media and the military did not know the current policy exists even though they practiced some of the common principles outlined in the document.

#### Use of Pools

The second research question is: Although the new doctrine states that open and independent coverage is the primary goal when granting access to military

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<sup>1</sup> Paradis.

<sup>2</sup> Law.

<sup>3</sup> O'Grady-Walsh.

operations, it does not exclude the use of pools. Does this set the military and the media on a collision course during future operations? Do the military and the media share the same views on the use of pools and how it may impact the desire for independent coverage?

The new policy reads:

The primary means of covering U.S. military operations shall be open and independent coverage by properly credentialed news media. There will be situations, especially in the deployment of joint forces or in support of specific missions, in which the formation of a news media pool shall be the most appropriate public affairs course of action.<sup>1</sup>

The researcher was surprised to find that the tensions between the media and the military on the use of pools appears to have disappeared and has been replaced by mutual understanding of a need for pools during certain, specific occasions.

Additionally, practically all the respondents felt that it is possible to have pools and independent coverage.

Wolman stated that the news media recognize there "are very specific circumstances under which pooling would be necessary and in which the news media was prepared to cooperate."<sup>2</sup> Those instances include combat deployments prepared in secret and for which it is necessary to have a small news group which would also deploy under rules of operational security. Wolman said:

There would also be some circumstances in which space limitations might create the need for a media pool. And, in many circumstances, the media and the Pentagon have agreed that these pools would be short-lived and would break up as soon as the conditions that created them would permit.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> U.S., DoD Instruction, 5400.14.4, 7.

<sup>2</sup> Wolman.

<sup>3</sup> Wolman.

In response to questions regarding pools, KCNC-TV Denver's Rick Sallinger stated contrary to the widely-held beliefs during and after the Persian Gulf War,

A pool isn't always something that's negative. In fact, a pool can be quite positive. For example, if we were told, 'OK. You can go where you want, when you want, but you [have] to gain your own access,' we might not be able to go into some places that we could if we had a military escort in a pool-type of situation.<sup>1</sup>

CBS News' David Martin concurred. He said pools are just a fact a life and it's something the media lives with all the time. "In Washington, there are pools that cover the president simply because...you cant get everybody who wants to cover the president into one room at the same time. I think we recognize that, in principle, in military operations."

The majority also expressed that pools and independent coverage are compatible ideas. They envisioned a situation where pools would be used during the opening hours of a military operation and then would break up and allow for independent coverage. As Galloway stated:

The ideal is that you get past that first bad week or whatever the [timeframe] is [of a military operation], and the pool goes out of business. At that point, you have enough people on hand. You've set up a joint information bureau, and the situation has cleared up to an extent where an individual reporter can go out to an individual unit and do a story.<sup>2</sup>

The researcher found that some military members recognized the flaws and inadequacies of the pool system. Brian Kilgallen, plans officer for the Office of the

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<sup>1</sup> Rick Sallinger, telephone interview, March 9, 1997.

<sup>2</sup> Galloway.

Secretary of Defense, described pools as "a necessary evil."<sup>1</sup> He said he understands "the media don't like pooling. [However, the military] "don't like pooling either."<sup>2</sup> And Brown felt pools favored the national media over smaller outlets. He cited the example of when "the heavyweights throw their weight around and end up with more bodies in the pool."<sup>3</sup> Brown stated:

You're not going to say 'no' if Dan Rather wants to be on a media pool. The military can't afford to say 'no.' You're not going to tell CNN or *USA Today* that 'we don't have room on the pool for you' or 'you have to wait your turn.' Whereas, you've got some of the local newspapers -- and it's just as important, for example, for a newspaper from Syracuse to be able to go and cover their local troops. But that doesn't occur. If we've got limited resources, we tend to lean toward getting the most bang for the buck. Well, I get more bang for the buck from CNN as opposed to the *Anchorage Daily News* [or some other small outlet].<sup>4</sup>

All the military panelists recognized a need for pools because of logistical restraints. For example, Captain Casey Mahon, chief of community relations at the Air Force Academy in Colorado said "there are times you have to have pools, and it's primarily because of logistics."<sup>5</sup> Colonel Virginia Pribyla, director of Air Force media relations, said pools are necessary because of the sheer numbers of reporters the military have to deal with. She said:

I can promise you right now that we will continue to use pools. The biggest reason for that is the fact that the media have not been as constrained in growing as we have. Indeed, while we've been exercising the drawdown, the

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<sup>1</sup> Brian Kilgallen, telephone interview, Feb. 28, 1977.

<sup>2</sup> Kilgallen.

<sup>3</sup> Brown.

<sup>4</sup> Brown.

<sup>5</sup> Capt. Casey Mahon, telephone interview, March 12, 1997.

media...have proliferated at an incredible rate. There is no way that military forces are going to be able to allow access if, for no other reason, than sheer space to all of those people who are going to show up at the fight.<sup>1</sup>

Although the military interviewees felt that it was possible to have pools and independent coverage, only one provided an explicit explanation of his view.

Lieutenant Colonel Bob Williams, director of public affairs for the Air Force Flight Test Center at Edwards AFB, California, said he didn't think pools and independent coverage were inherently exclusive. "You can have a pool that will go out and cover an event or a particular unit in the field, but that doesn't necessarily mean the Air Force is going to exercise any type of control over what that pool does or who they talk to."<sup>2</sup>

Although the concept of a numerical limitation is not expressed in the new policy, the researcher felt this was an important issue to address. The importance of this issue was accentuated during the interviewing process because so many comments were made by military and media respondents that the numbers of reporters covering military operations have soared over the course of years. However, the researcher was surprised to find that the majority of military interviewees thought the idea of a numerical limitation was unrealistic and impractical.

O'Grady-Walsh said she felt pools would work better than having the military "arbitrarily doing that choosing for them"<sup>3</sup> by imposing a numerical limitation on

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<sup>1</sup> Col. Virginia Pribyla, telephone interview, March 9, 1997.

<sup>2</sup> Lt. Col. Bob Williams, telephone interview, March 13, 1997.

<sup>3</sup> O'Grady-Walsh.

journalists covering operations. Lavigne viewed the idea of a numerical limitation as an infringement on the First Amendment rights of the media. "I don't think you can do that, simply because ... you're starting to infringe upon, number one -- freedom of speech, freedom of press, freedom of the people [and] their right to know."<sup>1</sup>

One of the few military interviewees who favored the idea of a numerical limitation is Gallagher. He views a future numerical limitation on military operations as imminent.

It appears that because of the explosion in the number and types of media, it's going to get out of hand if some kind of limit is not put on the numbers in future conflicts. So, unfortunately -- and I wish this wasn't the case -- it looks like there will be times when we're going to have to limit the numbers that are going to go into a theater or go into an area of operation.<sup>2</sup>

It should be noted that Gallagher is working on the draft of the new joint doctrine.

Although a few media panelists felt that a system of limiting the number of correspondents covering a military operation is a viable option in the future, the majority expressed views contrary to this. The majority felt that they didn't want the military deciding who could go and, yet, they also felt the media would have difficulty making the selection in a fair manner. For example, CBS' Martin said if you limit the number of journalists to 100 or 200, "who then chooses who the 100 are? The press are never going to be able to agree among themselves who the 200 are."<sup>3</sup> Martin said

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<sup>1</sup> Lavigne.

<sup>2</sup> Gallagher.

<sup>3</sup> Martin.

the idea of a numerical limitation doesn't strike him as "terribly realistic,"<sup>1</sup> but he recognizes that the media have showed no restraint in terms of sending people to cover the big stories. The *Washington Post's* Priest expressed doubt that a numerical limitation policy could work. "There really isn't...a way to work that out. I would hate to see a restriction on the number of people that can cover anything...I think that people would try to get around it."<sup>2</sup>

Galloway is one of the few journalists in favor of a numerical limitation. He believes a system similar to one employed by the British would work well.

I would favor the creation of something like the British system where the Ministry of Defence accredits journalists to cover defenses...those people so accredited are welcome to all operations, and if you're not accredited, stay the hell away. I think there's much to recommend [in] that system.<sup>3</sup>

Aukofer also believes a numerical limitation is in order. He and his co-author, Admiral Bill Lawrence advocate an independent coverage tier system that would be set up in peace time in order to accommodate those in the media who would be interested in covering a military operation. He explained:

There would be priorities set up because of the tier system -- Tier 1, Tier 2, Tier 3 -- which would basically reserve certain numbers, certain slots for diversity reasons, certain slots for the foreign press, and would establish priorities for the news organizations that provide the news to the most people - including the wire services, the network television, and so forth.

You have to have some limits to provide some certainty to the military commanders who don't want to be out there overwhelmed when they're trying to fight a war or engage in combat and save lives and win victories. At the

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<sup>1</sup> Martin.

<sup>2</sup> Priest.

<sup>3</sup> Galloway.

same time, a system like that would provide some certainty to the news organizations because they would know -- they wouldn't send people off on wild goose chases or send them into a theater where they might not be able to be accommodated.<sup>1</sup>

### Emerging Technologies

The third research question is: Technology has evolved at a rapid pace allowing for real-time transmissions from the battlefield. How has this impacted media coverage and public affairs operations? Should the policy have addressed this issue?

As indicated by the research question, the new DoD Instruction does not include public affairs guidance on how military personnel should handle access in light of evolving communications technology. The researcher felt the issue, which has cropped up several times since Grenada, was too important to ignore. Findings from the study indicate that both the media and the military acknowledge the impact technology has made on the way they do business. The military representatives stated concern for the media's real-time capability and how it creates a greater need for maintenance of operational security. Also, military members expressed concerns about how real-time transmissions may endanger the lives of troops in the field.

Although a few media representatives felt the impact of technology was overstated, they all acknowledged an understanding of the military's concern for operational security. All the respondents felt that creating policies to regulate technology in terms of battlefield access was not required. They believed a continuing

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<sup>1</sup> Aukofer.

dialogue between the media and the military, explaining ground rules and requirements is the best way to handle concerns.

Gallagher believes there are two types of real-time coverage. The kind where briefings to the press are televised live such as was the case during Desert Storm. He said "We were well aware of the problems associated with live coverage in that sense, in that the military briefers were very careful not to say anything that could jeopardize lives."<sup>1</sup> Gallagher distinguishes that from allowing press access and the ability to broadcast live from the battlefield. He viewed this as a "very dangerous undertaking and one that has to be carefully thought out and planned along with the news media before you do such a thing."<sup>2</sup> He said there were instances of security violations during Desert Storm, for example, when CNN filmed F-111 aircraft taking off from a base in Turkey. "That allowed the enemy to actually, in real time, see the aircraft taking off from the base."<sup>3</sup>

Shepherd said the advent of real-time capability has forced public affairs officers "to ensure information is correct and timely before it's release."<sup>4</sup> This places greater responsibility for military members to employ the security at the source policy.

Lavigne stressed the potential impact of live coverage of military operations on the safety of troops.

My thoughts are it can get us killed...if they light up an Inmarsat, for instance, they're going to leave an actual radar signature there. Where that

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<sup>1</sup> Gallagher.

<sup>2</sup> Gallagher.

<sup>3</sup> Gallagher.

<sup>4</sup> Shepherd.

unit was turned on at, that can tip the enemy...as far as your location, your position of ground troops. And if you have reporters who are violating rules as far as when to and when not to transmit...you're jeopardizing safety. Can we stop it? No.<sup>1</sup>

Williams also believes that the technology evolution cannot be stopped, and it is something the military must learn to live and deal with. "We're in an instantaneous information exchange right now and the military has to operate in that environment. News is made all over the world and it's reported the same day all over the world."<sup>2</sup>

Williams believes the military should view the media in the same manner as the Marines do. "They view the news media as another element of the fog of war -- just like weather, just like confusion, just like communications breakdowns or anything else. It's another thing you have to deal with and another aspect of the battlefield."<sup>3</sup>

Although real-time coverage brings many complications with it to the battlefield, Paradis believes it provides an enormous advantage to the military in terms of inflicting psychological damage on the enemy.

When you're talking about real-time coverage, for example, in Haiti where DoD made a concentrated effort to get information out to the media in advance, and they were reporting live on CNN what we were doing, when the planes were taking off and when the invasion was occurring and all that...that is an enormous psychological tool that can be used to our advantage.<sup>4</sup>

O'Grady-Walsh agreed that real-time coverage can be an asset to military operations and is a primary source of information for planning missions. "Let's face it.

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<sup>1</sup> Lavigne.

<sup>2</sup> Williams.

<sup>3</sup> Williams.

<sup>4</sup> Paradis.

Thanks partially to us, CNN is now an intelligence tool. You can go into our intelligence shop here, the most forward permanent operating base in the Air Force, and they've got CNN on 24 hours a day."<sup>1</sup>

Although many of the media representatives acknowledged that emerging technology has had an impact on coverage of military operations, a couple felt the issue has been overstated somewhat. Aukofer said the image of a television journalist with a backpack who can set up his own camera on a tripod and report to a satellite out in the middle of a battlefield is a bit of a caricature. For one thing, he said the technology is "not quite there."<sup>2</sup> Additionally, modern ground warfare is "highly maneuverable, usually happens at night, so that it probably wouldn't be too likely that a television reporter could report in real time that way from the battlefield."<sup>3</sup>

However, several media representatives echoed the belief of those in the military who felt the emerging technology which allows real-time transmission is just a fact of life. CNN's Clancy said "The ability to bring it to you [the public] live, to bring it to you instantaneously is, again, part of our world today and it's part of what the media's going to be doing." And Browne stated,

Technology is not going to stop. Cellular phones are not going to just disappear. GPS navigators -- we all carry them in our pockets now. There are some laptop computers that can be hooked up to a little satellite dish. These are the realities of the 21st century.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> O'Grady-Walsh.

<sup>2</sup> Aukofer.

<sup>3</sup> Aukofer.

<sup>4</sup> Malcom Browne.

And ABC News' McWethy did acknowledge risks to operational security during real-time transmissions. "When I'm on a live hook-up...there is always a period of vulnerability there for whatever is happening [operationally].<sup>1</sup> Clancy concurred with McWethy's assessment of the risks to security.

With the advent of live television, there are new risks and new responsibilities. We can now go live from anywhere. All I need is a flatbed truck and I can go live from anywhere. That technology is only going to get smaller and better. I'm going to become more and more portable in terms of where I can take my equipment and set up my uplink that would enable me to feed out live pictures around the world. There are times when I might not want or intend to show outgoing rounds or location of artillery or something like that, but the camera catches it. And while I might not be able to look at the television screen and tell where that is coming from, it's inevitable that somebody watching the television can. This is one of the risks that we're facing with advances in technology.<sup>2</sup>

McWethy also noted that, similar to how video coverage of major news events such as the Los Angeles riots of 1992 may present a distorted account or reality, the same can happen to coverage of military operations. For example, he said a CNN report during the Haiti operation was misleading.

I happened to be watching, in my hotel in Haiti, Christiane Amanpour doing a report about looting of a warehouse down near the poor sections of Port-au-Prince. She was standing on top of a car and she was screaming. Looting was going, and there were tight shots of people breaking into the building... and there happened to be an angry crowd. It was a charged situation. I got into a jeep and went down to the area and, as I drove up, I was stunned. There was a group of around 30 people watching this whole spectacle. It was the only place in all of Port-au-Prince that was being broken into. There were about three guys sort of carrying stuff out routinely. And Christiane Amanpour was standing on top of the car screaming her head off, and she was going out across the world with this story. And it looked, for all the world to see, like

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<sup>1</sup> McWethy.

<sup>2</sup> Clancy.

downtown Port-au-Prince was a mass of looting and lawlessness, when in fact it wasn't at all.

All of both the military and media respondents doubted whether the issue could be addressed in a formal policy. They felt a continued dialogue was the best way to handle concerns that emerge in the future. For example, Headline said "reasonable men...and women can get together and figure out guidelines that are appropriate to particular situations."<sup>1</sup> Pribyla concurred, stating that the media and the military will have to deal with concerns by relying "on the professionalism of the people."<sup>2</sup>

Despite the fact that all the respondents doubted the ability to address the issue in a formal policy, Brian Kilgallen, author of the DoD Instruction under study, said real-time coverage issues will be addressed in the joint doctrine currently in the draft stage. He said the issue is also being covered at the Defense Information School, where all public affairs officers are trained. He said we "strongly emphasize the instantaneous coverage from the battlefield today and, again, why it's so important to do security at the source."<sup>3</sup>

#### Multinational Operations

The research question is: How do multinational operations affect U.S. military media policies? Is access an issue? Should media procedures for multinational operations be covered in a formal policy?

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<sup>1</sup> Headline.

<sup>2</sup> Pribyla.

<sup>3</sup> Brian Kilgallen.

Again, the new DoD Instruction does not address how to handle the issue of access in multinational operations. The researcher felt this was an important area to explore as U.S. military operations are increasingly multinational in nature. The researcher felt an assessment of the issue in terms of differences in allied/U.N. approaches to media access and whether the topic should be addressed in the form of a formal regulation such as the new DoD Instruction.

Results from the interviews suggest that access in multinational operations can be complicated at times, depending on a few variables such as the country hosting the operation, cultural biases, and the temperament of the people involved.

Mahon stated that "U.S. [media] policy does not dictate other nations' roles. I don't think it's our place as one nation to tell nations what they can and cannot do in terms of the press."<sup>1</sup> Gallagher said the rule of thumb for multinational operations is based on who's in charge of it. For example, if it's a NATO operation, that organization has its own public affairs apparatus, and they decide the issue. "If it's not going to be a NATO operation -- say it's an operation just involving three or four countries, then countries will follow the lead of the lead commander, and his PAO will pretty much dictate how that works."<sup>2</sup>

Although it sounds clear and simple from what Gallagher said, Shepherd addressed the complications military public affairs people encounter in multinational operations. He stated that "U.N. and U.S. public affairs guidance is not always

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<sup>1</sup> Mahon.

<sup>2</sup> Gallagher.

compatible. At some point in time, the issue of interoperability with our allies needs to be addressed.”<sup>1</sup> Shepherd said in his experience with NATO operations, U.S. public affairs officers oftentimes find themselves at constant odds with NATO public affairs operations and philosophies. Part of the problem, according to Shepherd, is that few NATO public affairs officers are trained in the profession. “They often bring national, operational and cultural bias into their public affairs function, to the detriment of the operation.”<sup>2</sup>

Pribyla, who has worked with the media all over the world, including Japan, Korea, Romania, Germany, and Poland, also acknowledged the difficulties of which Shepherd spoke, “they all approach it in a totally different way.”<sup>3</sup> Brown concurred. he said during some multinational operations you think you’re playing under American rules. ““OK, I can shoot photos in here. I can let the media shoot photos here,” and some of the countries respond ‘No, we can’t have our troops photographed.’”<sup>4</sup> This is something that Paradis finds frustrating.

It gets frustrating because the U.S. military has defined policies and procedures on releasing information and how to conduct press conferences. Some of the nations you come across don’t have the organizational structure as it applies to media relations.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Shepherd.

<sup>2</sup> Shepherd.

<sup>3</sup> Shepherd.

<sup>4</sup> Brown.

<sup>5</sup> Paradis.

Sallinger, who covered multinational operations when he worked for CNN also acknowledged the disparity in access that can occur.

Even if you have the U.N. credentials, when you're in a multinational operation, you get a great deal of disparity depending on which multinational force you're dealing with. For example, the Americans might welcome us with open arms, but the Russians would not. While they may be wearing blue [berets] and may be under U.N. command, they are still the force of that particular nation and each nation reacts differently to the news media.<sup>1</sup>

Generally, though, the majority of media representatives felt access to these operations are pretty good even with the disparity of approaches by the different nations. However, Aukofer and Galloway brought up the issue of foreign press access to U.S. troops or units, something that has rarely been addressed. Combelles-Siegel said the Somalia operation was the only example in which the U.S. military made an effort to grant access to foreign media.<sup>2</sup> Aukofer said he believes the decision to grant foreign press access to U.S. units "should be left up to the discretion of the military commanders."<sup>3</sup> Aukofer believes the U.S. military doesn't have an obligation to foreign news organizations under the First Amendment to the Constitution, but feels the military would be more favorably inclined to "choose allies like Great Britain and France"<sup>4</sup> than some more questionable countries.

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<sup>1</sup> Sallinger.

<sup>2</sup> Combelles-Siegel. 34.

<sup>3</sup> Aukofer.

<sup>4</sup> Aukofer.

Galloway, however, believes that can lead to some members of the foreign media "having their cake and eating it too."<sup>1</sup> He was referring to a situation where the foreign press would have access to U.S. troops, but not vice-versa. For example, "in the Gulf...British correspondents who were accredited had total access to the British forces. We had no access to those forces, because we were not accredited by the British Ministry of Defence."<sup>2</sup> He sees this as an unresolved issue and believes that the U.S. military should acknowledge multinational operations is the wave of the future and should formulate some sort of policy to address the issue.

#### Joint Information Bureaus

The research question is: In the past, public affairs officers have complained about a lack of adequate equipment, facilities and supplies to operate joint information bureaus in a proper manner. The new DoD Instruction addresses this issue. In practice, has this problem been completely resolved? If so, how? If not, why not?

The policy reads:

The news media who cover any joint operation will be outfitted with the most modern and efficient equipment. Commanders must ensure that the public affairs infrastructure in place to support the joint mission is to the extent possible, compatible. Much of that equipment must be provided by the responsible combatant commander. This is especially true in support to the DoD National Media Pool, the command's primary JIB, and those assets necessary to support the mission in its earliest stages. (Lists assets)<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Galloway.

<sup>2</sup> Galloway.

<sup>3</sup> U.S., DoD Instruction 5400.14.4.4, 5-2

The military interviewees all felt that the issue of adequately-equipped joint information bureaus have yet to be resolved. The panelists said the major problem with achieving this stated objective is funding and logistics. For example, Shepherd said "funding for...equipment is consistently a problem. Our only work around this has been to borrow and consolidate equipment assets from several units to get what you need for any given operation."<sup>1</sup> Law believes once the public affairs people obtain the equipment, they usually encounter difficulties transporting it to the area of responsibility. This is because public affairs assets is often not seen as a priority for commanders who need to transport troops and other equipment in order to conduct a military operation. Law believes DoD and the Air Force need to exert pressure from "the top-down to make it happen."<sup>2</sup>

The interviewees said the problem is that each service and the major commands within are required to buy their own equipment. Therefore, funding priorities vary from service-to-service and major command-to-major command. Paradis said, "It's always kind of like you have to bring your own stuff...it gets to be a real pain...because I don't have the money within my unit to come up with an adequate deployment kit."<sup>3</sup> Additionally, the type of equipment used by one service may vary from what is used by another service. This means airmen and sailors thrown together in a joint information bureau may not have the same training for the equipment provided. Gallagher said

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<sup>1</sup> Shepherd.

<sup>2</sup> Law.

<sup>3</sup> Paradis.

"It's still up to the services to train and equip, and yet what we're doing is going into these joint operations where we all need the same kind of equipment and the same training."<sup>1</sup>

The military interviewees do have ideas on how to resolve the situation. For example, Pribyla thinks in the future the military will have to "get to the point where we can do very quick contracting to get the equipment that we need at the time we need it instead of buying it."<sup>2</sup> She said this idea would prevent JIB equipment from becoming obsolete within two years of its purchase. "The media are out there with stuff that's ten times smaller and ten times faster. We've got to be able to compete."<sup>3</sup>

Williams would like to put the onus on the joint commands -- European Command, Central Command, and Southern Command, for example -- to provide the assets. "They ought to have the capability at those headquarters -- if an operation starts in their area of responsibility -- to equip their JIB."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Gallagher.

<sup>2</sup> Pribyla.

<sup>3</sup> Pribyla.

<sup>4</sup> Williams.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Overview

This chapter provides an overview of the findings and conclusions by the researcher. Recommendations are made in terms of ways the new DoD Instruction can be improved and for further areas of research.

#### Conclusions

In a telephone interview with the researcher, Brian Kilgallen, author of the DoD Instruction under study, said "I think what we've got is a good Instruction. We put a lot of thought into this...we've spent a number of years working on this and collecting a great deal of data from people and I think we have a near-perfect document."<sup>1</sup>

The researcher agrees with Kilgallen's assessment that the DoD Instruction is a vast improvement over pre-Gulf War policies which greatly limited access in favor of pools and a cumbersome security review process. Recent improvements in access to operations in Somalia, Haiti, and Bosnia, are testament to the effectiveness of the 1992 DoD Principles for News Media Coverage and, hence, this new Instruction which is based on those principles. As ABC's John McWethy noted, "The American military

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<sup>1</sup> Kilgallen.

learned a lot of lessons...they had come in my opinion, thousands of miles. They took many of the lessons learned from Somalia and they embedded those lessons in the design for press access to Haiti.”<sup>1</sup>

*Washington Post* correspondent Dana Priest also noted the improvements in policies governing military operations. Priest said during her trip to Bosnia she “was given what [she] think[s] is fairly free access.”<sup>2</sup> Priest said she wasn’t denied anything by anyone. “I wanted to attend the daily briefings for commanders. They talked to the commanders about it and that was permitted. And in one case, there was some information that was probably classified. They asked me not to reveal it. That was fine.”<sup>3</sup>

The new principle, which does for the first time formally state open and independent coverage will be the primary goals when allowing access to military operations, has resolved a lot of the historical tensions between the media and the military. The same thing can also be said of the fact the policy replaces the tedious and frustrating security review process with the more favorable -- by media and military representatives -- “security at the source.”

However, despite these improvements, the researcher does not concur with Kilgallen’s assessment that the policy is a “pretty near-perfect” document. There are areas that have been shown to need improvements based on the findings of the

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<sup>1</sup> McWethy.

<sup>2</sup> Priest.

<sup>3</sup> Priest.

research. First of all, it is clear from the interviews the researcher conducted that many of the interviewees had not heard about the new Instruction, even though the basic principles were being practiced. Also, it is apparent that even though most of the panelists understood the basic definitions of the key concepts of open and independent coverage and security at the source, there still is room for improvement in clarifying the document. In the researcher's opinion, a policy is only as good as the number of people who see it, read it, and understand it. Therefore, the researcher recommends that a continuing dialogue take place between media and military personnel to ensure that a shared understanding exists between the two establishments.

Secondly, the researcher feels the DoD has made great strides by subjugating the use of pools, except for specific circumstances, to open and independent coverage. Both the media and military interviewees indicated they were amenable to this policy objective. However, the researcher concurs with Combelles-Siegel who stated, "provisions leave the door largely open to using pools as a way to limit and not to grant access."<sup>1</sup> The researcher believes this is true because of the astronomical increase in coverage of military operations over the years. The researcher feels this trend will continue as the news media becomes even more competitive. No commander trying to minimize the fog of war would allow a military operation to be overrun by journalists simply because they want to "get the story." As Pribyla stated, "There is no way in the world that any commander is going to give up that level of control."<sup>2</sup> Therefore, the researcher believes, despite the fact that a majority of the

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<sup>1</sup> Combelles-Siegel, 33.

<sup>2</sup> Pribyla.

media and military interviewees were opposed to it, placing the option of having numerical limitations on the number of journalists covering a military operation should be incorporated in a future version of this directive. The researcher believes a system similar to the one employed by the British, whereby slots are allocated, would be appropriate for handling the ever-increasing number of media representatives wanting access to an operation. The researcher feels it should be left up to commanders and public affairs officers to make the determination of the number of media slots at the start of planning for the operations. However, it should be left up to the media to determine who should fill those positions.

Third, the directive failed to address emerging technologies and how they should be handled when granting access to military operations. The researcher believes this to be a major oversight as both the media and the military panelists acknowledge technology has had a major impact on how public affairs and media operations are conducted. Also, the researcher believes both the majority of the media and the military interviewees downplayed the potential impact of these technologies during future operations, especially in light of the proliferation of reporters who may be using portable satellites and other equipment that allows instantaneous transmissions. The researcher feels this is part of the historical shortsightedness of both parties involved. For example, the fact that media personnel may be operating communications devices in a situation where detection is a probability may be a real problem depending on the nature of the operation. While the researcher does not expect those in the media and the military to be fortune-tellers, she does believe this

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issue should be addressed in a future version of the directive and serious dialogue should be held between the media and the military before such a problem arises.

Fourth, the researcher believes the media and the military have a firm grasp as to how access should and is granted during multinational operations, although they acknowledged inevitable tensions as a result of cultural differences. However, the researcher discovered another issue -- foreign access to U.S. military units -- during the interviews.<sup>1</sup> The researcher believes that because of the increasing trend toward multinational operations, the DoD needs to address how this should be handled in a future directive. The researcher advocates a limited number of slots be made available for access. However, it should be left up to the commander and public affairs officer to make that determination at the beginning of planning for an operation.

Fifth, the researcher feels the DoD has done an outstanding job in outlining how joint information bureaus should be equipped for a military operation. Many military members felt the way Lavigne did when he said there's been "leaps and bounds made toward,"<sup>2</sup> improving the situation with requirements listed in the objective. However, the research showed that, in practice, the JIBs are still ill-equipped to handle the influx of media trying to cover operations. The two main problems appear to be funding and logistics. Each service (and major commands within the service) is responsible for funding equipment used by its personnel participating in military operations. That means funding for equipment and supplies

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<sup>1</sup> Aukofer; Galloway.

<sup>2</sup> Lavigne.

vary according to the resources and priorities of each major command. This leads to incompatible equipment procurements, resulting in training problems when members of different services are thrown together in a JIB. Some may be trained on programs that are unavailable for their use during an operation. This is an inefficient use of manpower and resources. Instead of leaving it to the services to fund equipment and supplies for JIBs, the researcher feels it would be more logical for the funding for resources to come out of a single DoD source. This would ensure a set amount of money is used to buy or contract needed supplies and equipment for the various JIBs, ensuring standardization of assets and increased productivity as all public affairs practitioners would be trained to use the items procured.

Also, the researcher recommends a continual dialogue between the media and the military on a formal basis at regular intervals -- once or twice a year. From the literature review, it appears such dialogue only occurs during or immediately after a crisis. Panels are held and recommendations provided, but little follow-up is done until they encounter the next crisis. Instead of waiting for such an event, the researcher believes the media and the military would benefit from the increased education about requirements and limitations and that knowledge would circumvent major conflicts in the future. Additionally, such meetings would ensure the media and the military uphold their end of the bargain as outlined in the 1992 DoD Principles of News Coverage, on which the directive is based. The meetings could also serve as an educational tool for young journalists and public affairs officers if they're held in a forum such as the Defense Information School, where public affairs officers and enlisted members are

trained. A selection of promising journalists could be invited to attend and to listen to the panel of elites (high-level military members, and national journalists) discuss various issues.

### Recommendations for Further Study

There are several areas for possible study the author believes would enhance understanding and deepen the corps of knowledge regarding media access and military-media relations in general. For example, several interviewees mentioned the effectiveness of the Marine Corps in integrating media coverage in their planning for operations, especially during the Persian Gulf War.<sup>1</sup> A comparison of military public affairs operations could be made to assess the strengths and weaknesses of each program. Results from the findings could be used to enhance the various military public affairs programs.

On a broader level, a study of the impact of media, especially television, on foreign policy could be examined. Coverage of past military operations in such places as Somalia and Rwanda have revealed "television's ability to show conflicts as they occur greatly reduces the time that governments have for deliberation and negotiation before the public demands action."<sup>2</sup> This would be a highly-relevant study considering the numerous peacekeeping and humanitarian missions the military has conducted over the years, some say to the detriment of the armed forces with shrinking manpower and resources leading to increased retention problems.

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<sup>1</sup> Fialka; McWethy; O'Grady-Walsh; Paradis; Williams.

<sup>2</sup> Jacqueline Sharkey, "When Pictures Drive Foreign Policy, American Journalism Review, December 1993, 19.

Although the issue of public opinion was touched on briefly in this study, the researcher feels a more expanded effort could be applied to the issue of how public opinion and military conflicts are interrelated. A study of the various factors involved in shaping public opinion before and during an event would be most enlightening, providing a better understanding of why government and military leaders felt there was a great need to manage the media during post-Vietnam military operations.

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## APPENDIX A

### *PROCEDURES FOR JOINT PUBLIC AFFAIRS OPERATIONS*

- References:
- (a) DoD Directive 5400.13, "Joint Public Affairs Operations," January 9, 1996
  - (b) DoD Directive 5122.5, "Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs," December 2, 1993
  - (c) Joint pub 5-03.2, "Joint Operations Planning and Execution System," Vol. II (Planning and Execution Formats and Guidance), March 1992
  - (d) DoD Instruction 5040.4, "Joint Combat Camera (COMCAM) Operations," March 5, 1990
  - (e) through (j), see enclosure 1

#### A. PURPOSE

This Instruction implements policy, assigns responsibilities, and prescribes procedures under reference (a) for the conduct of public affairs programs in support of joint, combined, and unilateral military operations.

#### B. APPLICABILITY

This Instruction applies to the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), the Military Departments, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Unified Combatant Commands, the Inspector General of the Department of Defense (IG, DoD), the Defense Agencies, and the DoD Field Activities (hereafter referred to collectively as "the DoD Components"). The term "Military Departments," as used herein, refers to the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, the Marine Corps, and the Coast Guard when it is operating as a military service in the Navy.

#### C. DEFINITIONS

Terms used in this Instruction are defined in enclosure 2.

#### D. POLICY

It is DoD policy that:

1. Under reference (a), commanders and heads of the DoD Components involved in joint, combined, and unilateral military operations shall plan for, resource, and conduct public affairs activities to support such missions.

2. The combatant commanders, in accordance with the DoD Principles of Information, shall grant the news media, both civilian and military, access to unclassified joint, combined, and unilateral operations, consistent with operations security and prevailing public affairs guidance (PAG). Concern over the personal safety of journalists shall not be a factor in deciding the degree of access. The DoD Principles of Information and the DoD Principles for New Media Coverage of DoD Operations are contained in enclosures 3 and 4, respectively, of this Instruction.

#### E. RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs shall:

- a. Retain primary responsibility for the consistent implementation of DoD information policy in DoD Directive 5400.13 (reference (a)) and DoD Directive 5122.5 (reference (b)).
- b. Determine who shall serve as the initial source of information about joint, combined, and unilateral operations and decide whether to delegate public affairs release authority to combatant command level.
- c. Review, coordinate, approve, and disseminate PAG, public affairs plans, and public affairs annexes written under Joint Pub 5-03.2 (reference (c)).
- d. Establish and exercise procedures for the administrative management, activation, and direction of the DoD National Media Pool; and direct the deployment of the DoD National Media Pool when ordered by the Secretary of Defense.
- e. Coordinate public affairs matters within the Department of Defense and with other Federal Departments and Agencies outside the Department of Defense.
- f. Provide policy guidance for the employment of joint combat camera teams and the distribution of their products, as established in DoD Instruction 5040.4 (reference (d)). The audiovisual products of combat camera teams shall be appropriately classified at the source in accordance with DoD Directive 5200.1 (reference (e)). They may be cleared for public release in accordance with DoD Directive 5230.9 (reference (f)).
- g. Provide representation to the OSD Crisis Coordination Center and establish, as necessary, a crisis and/or wartime public affairs cell at the Pentagon to provide continuous public affairs planning, to gather and disseminate information, and to evaluate public affairs support of the operational mission.
- h. Conduct periodic news briefings on issues and events about ongoing joint, combined, and unilateral operations.

i. Support Unified Combatant Command plans for the command information mission, including the deployment of broadcast facilities from the Armed Forces Radio and Television Service (AFRTS), under DoD Directive 5120.20 (reference (g)), and distribution of print media. The on-scene commander shall determine when these services should begin, but services will be provided at the earliest practicable opportunity.

j. Conduct joint public affairs training at the Defense Information School for entry- and advanced-level military and civilian public affairs personnel of all grades.

k. In coordination with the Defense Information School, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Military Departments, and the Unified Combatant Commands, develop, teach, and maintain public affairs policy.

2. The Secretaries of the Military Departments shall:

a. Coordinate closely with the combatant commanders to determine the resources (personnel and equipment) needed to conduct successful public affairs activities in joint or single-service environments. Ensure the prompt and sustained availability of Active and Reserve component public affairs resources needed to support any assigned mission. Ensure that a fully capable public affairs structure, made up of active and Reserve component assets, exists to support short-notice deployments.

b. Organize, train, fund, and equip public affairs personnel and units to conduct public affairs activities in support of combatant commanders conducting operations. Personnel and units needed to support the earliest stages of any operation should be immediately available for deployment to assist the supported commander in chief in addressing news media information requirements.

c. Conduct Service-unique public affairs programs required to support joint and unilateral operations. Included are command information programs that serve deployed military personnel and the military forces and families at home station, as well as community relations programs designed to meet existing DoD policies and directives.

d. Ensure that public affairs personnel are properly trained, qualified, and able to function in joint, combined, and unilateral operational environments.

e. Provide public affairs training at Service schools and encourage programs that improve understanding and cooperation between the military and the news media.

f. Provide news media training for public affairs personnel, commanders, and key staff who would be involved in wartime media relations activities.

g. Support planning and provide resources for contingency and wartime operations of AFRTS.

3. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff shall:

a. Promulgate joint public affairs doctrine.

b. Ensure that existing operational public affairs plans comply with published joint public affairs doctrine and guidance.

c. Establish a Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Public Affairs Response Cell within the National Military Command Center during times of crisis and conflict to provide public affairs support to the Office of the Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs (OATSD (PA)).

d. Support the Department of Defense in explaining mission aspects of joint and unilateral operations by making available senior officers with expertise in matters of interest to the news media and the public.

e. Plan for the employment of combat camera assets in crisis situations, operations, and exercises, in accordance with DoD Instruction 5040.4 (reference (d)).

f. Plan for the employment of Reserve component public affairs assets to support the unique public information and command information requirements of mobilized Reserve component units.

4. The Commanders of the Unified Combatant Commands shall:

a. Include in operations plans an annex that establishes responsive public affairs organizations and structures and shall provide dedicated personnel, facilities, equipment, transportation, and communications assets to the public affairs mission. (see enclosure 5) Since resources should ideally be in place before the beginning of operations, deployment plans shall assign a high priority for the movement of public affairs assets. To ensure that adequate public affairs support is available to meet news media requirements, there shall be a high priority assigned for the movement of public affairs assets by air and ground transportation.

b. Plan to support news media from the earliest, pre-deployment stages of any operation. Commanders shall ensure that reporters are granted all possible access to all unclassified activities, including combat operations. The personal safety

of correspondents is not a reason for excluding them from such situations. The goal is to accompany the organizations during the conduct of their missions.

c. Besides the planning required under Joint Pub 5-03.2 (reference (c)), develop operational public affairs policy and guidance in accordance with DoD Instruction 5405.3 (reference (h)), which recommends the policy approach (active or passive), proposes news statements, and provides responses to anticipated news media questions.

d. Prepare for and assist in the deployment and operation of the DoD National Media Pool.

e. Conduct a full range of public affairs activities consistent with current PAG, public affairs release authority, and operations security requirements.

f. As appropriate, establish, resource, and operate Joint Information Bureaus (JIBs) to serve as focal points of interface between the joint forces and the news media. The Unified Combatant Command JIB shall provide direct public affairs support to the Joint Task Force Commander. The Director of the JIB shall receive public affairs policy guidance and oversight from the Unified Combatant Command in coordination with OATSD (PA). Be prepared to participate in Combined Information Bureaus (CIBs) or Allied Press Information Centers (APICs) to be established by the responsible combined commander and supported by the contributing nations.

g. Assist news media in gaining access to the full spectrum of U.S. military units and personnel conducting joint and unilateral operations, subject to special operations restrictions. Access includes commanders, staffs, officers, and enlisted personnel directly involved with combat and sustainment operations.

h. As needed, support on a 24-hour basis other information requirements identified by OATSD (PA). Provide daily JIB, CIB, or APIC situation reports to OATSD (PA) during current operations as circumstances require, apprising OATSD (PA) immediately of major operational developments, incidents, or other newsworthy events.

i. Prepare plans to conduct command information programs using, as appropriate, component assets and resources. Plan to employ the capabilities of AFRTS and other internal news media products that convey information to deployed forces, those remaining at the home station, and all family members.

j. Apply ground rules for releasing information equally to civilian reporters and to military reporters assigned command information tasks.

k. Provide public affairs resources (personnel, equipment, transportation, and communications) to the supported combatant commander as

identified in approved contingency plans. Be prepared to reinforce the supported combatant commander to meet unplanned resource requirements.

l. As established in DoD Instruction 5040.4 (reference (d)), designate an officer as the combat camera representative to plan for the employment of combat camera assets.

m. In accordance with reference (d), plan for the employment of combat camera assets in crisis situations, operations, and exercises. Provide the Joint Combat Camera Center appropriate combat camera documentary products for release to the news media through OATSD (PA).

n. Ensure that public affairs personnel and units are properly prepared to support the assigned operational mission.

o. Support the public affairs requirements of Reserve component units mobilized and deployed in a theater of operations. Unlike active duty forces, which generally deploy from major installations, Reserve component units come from communities throughout the country. Reserve component personnel leave civilian jobs behind, and Reserve component family members are generally not accustomed to long-term deployments. Support from family members, community leaders, and former employers is vital to unit and individual morale and to recruiting and retention efforts following demobilization. Commander must ensure that Reserve component family members and hometown news media are provided a continuous flow of information to dispel rumors and anxieties, sustain public awareness, and increase understanding of Reserve component units and their missions in the theater of operations.

## F. PROCEDURES

1. PAG and Planning. While the supported commander must plan for, resource, and execute public affairs operations, the accomplishment of the overall military strategic and operational public affairs objectives relies on the coordinated responses of supporting combatant commands, the Military Departments, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and OATSD (PA).

a. Joint, combined, and unilateral public affairs operations must involve a process of deliberate planning to produce public affairs assessments, assign public affairs and/or communications objectives, develop public affairs employment concepts, establish command relationships, and provide necessary resources. The development and dissemination of DoD-approved PAG throughout the command ensures unity of effort by providing commanders and PAOs a common reference for discussions with the news media and others.

b. As directed in DoD Directive 5122.5 (reference (b)), the heads of the DoD components shall coordinate with ATSD (PA) on

public affairs matters. Public affairs plans, programs, policies, or actions that have operational implications shall be coordinated with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and other appropriate governmental agencies at the national level and approved by ATSD (PA).

2. Public Affairs Operational Infrastructure. To meet their responsibilities to communicate to the general public, commanders shall devote resources necessary for a robust, responsive, and efficient public affairs infrastructure under prevailing DoD PAG. Commanders shall assess the media and public opinion environments to ensure adequate, immediately available dedicated personnel, equipment, transportation, and communications resources to meet the demands for information.

3. Access to Military Units. Joint force commanders shall ensure that the credentialed news media covering their operations are granted access to military units and activities consistent with operations security. The goal is to provide journalists a complete overview of the entire operation, subject to security restrictions, and to assist journalists in reporting about the objectives and accomplishments of joint operations and the complexity of challenges faced by military forces. Concern about the personal safety of reporters is not a reason for limiting access.

4. Operations Security. All commanders shall take those steps necessary to balance their parallel responsibilities of allowing open and independent reporting on their forces and ensuring operational security. Each of these responsibilities requires a directed effort to identify what information is releasable to the news media. While there may be situations when a formal security review of news products may be necessary, the more usual case shall involve the disciplined practice of "security at the source." Under that concept, those meeting with the news media shall ensure that classified information is not revealed. News media agreement to reasonable ground rules for coverage will reinforce, but not replace, individual awareness of sensitive material. Through early inclusion in the planning process, the public affairs officer will be aware of the various aspects of mission and will understand clearly the inherent security sensitivities, thereby decreasing the chances of a security lapse and increasing the opportunities for a successful effort.

5. News Media Pool Coverage. The primary means of covering U.S. military operations shall be open and independent coverage by properly credentialed news media. There will be situations, especially in the deployment of joint forces or in support of specific missions, in which the formation of a news media pool shall be the most appropriate public affairs course of action. Contingency planning shall include provisions to accommodate the DoD National Media Pool or locally formed pools and provide equipment, transportation, and communications assets necessary to

gather information and file stories about the joint force. Joint Pub 5-03.2 (reference (c)) establishes planning requirements for employment of the DoD National Media Pool in all contingency missions. Plans must address the following:

- a. Daily, comprehensive, and unclassified operational briefings for pool personnel.
- b. Access to areas of ongoing combat and/or exercise operations. As in all such situations, the personal safety of the news media is not a reason for excluding them. The goal is to treat the news media as members of units, allowing them to accompany the organizations in the conduct of their missions.
- c. Reasonable access to key command and staff personnel.
- d. An officer from the supported command in the grade of O-5 to O-6 to coordinate news media pool requirements.
- e. Itinerary planning that will enable news media pool members to disperse throughout the operational area.
- f. Cooperation from all U.S. forces participating in the operation or exercise on a not-to-interfere basis.
- g. Supported commanders shall be responsible for planning logistical support for pool and escort personnel out of existing contingency or exercise funds. Required support may include, but may not be limited to, the following:
  - (1) Existing contingency or exercise airlift from the continental United States to the area of operation or exercise and return;
  - (2) Theater ground, sea, and air transportation to allow pool coverage of operations.
  - (3) Messing and billeting on a reimbursable basis.
  - (4) Issuance of equipment considered appropriate to the situation (helmets, canteens, flak vests, etc.).
  - (5) Access to communication facilities to file stories on an expedited basis.
- h. In cases where open and independent coverage is not possible for selected ongoing operations, planning shall address requirements needed to support temporary news media pools.

7. Resource Requirements. Joint, combined, and unilateral public affairs activities are personnel and resource intensive, and no single organization or command possesses sufficient assets to conduct effective wartime public affairs operations.

a. Commanders must ensure that the operations planning process includes public affairs assessments that precisely identify resource requirements. Plans must provide for specific measures to reinforce personnel and procure, lease, or assign the necessary resources. That effort shall involve assistance from the supporting combatant commands and the Military Departments. It is essential that all materials be immediately deployable and provided on a dedicated basis so that the responsible commander can sustain public affairs operations at required levels.

b. Each phase of an operation will have unique public affairs implications that require the attention of the commander, the staff, and the PAO. News media interest will vary, and military support packages must be able to accommodate surges in news media activities. The goal is to anticipate and respond to fluctuating coverage and to tailor resources to ensure no loss of efficiency.

c. Enclosure 5 outlines the kinds of resources needed to support joint public affairs operations. Each situation requires a mix of assets tailored specifically to the tasks outlined in the mission statement.

8. Exercises. It is essential that public affairs tasks conducted in support of exercises resemble, to the extent possible, the techniques and procedures appropriate to actual contingency operations. Commanders shall ensure that the public affairs functions of assessment, policy development, planning, resourcing, media relations, command information, and feedback are brought together in the training environment.

9. Command Information. Combatant commanders retain responsibility for the command information mission and should ensure that assets needed to conduct the mission are deployed early. That process requires close coordination with the Military Departments and the supporting combatant commanders for reinforcement. It is essential that such programs include timely information about current national, international, and military events, as well as on DoD and Military Department policy information. Members of joint forces who operate with clear understandings of their roles and responsibilities are best prepared to accomplish their missions. Additionally, commanders shall ensure that their public affairs plans also include those steps needed to inform non-deployed military personnel and all family members about the activities of the forces and their roles in the overall joint mission.

10. Community Relations. Whether conducting joint operations in the United States or overseas, combatant commanders shall plan for and execute community relations programs that support direct communication with local, national, and international publics, as applicable. This effort requires close coordination with the Military Departments and the host-nations.

G. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Instruction is effective immediately.

Kenneth H. Bacon  
Assistant to the Secretary  
of Defense for Public Affairs

Enclosures - 5

1. References
2. Definitions
3. Principles of Information
4. DoD Principles of News Media Coverage of DoD Operations
5. Generic Public Affairs Resource Requirements

**REFERENCES**, continued

- (e) DoD Directive 5200.1, "DoD Information Security Program," June 7, 1982
- (f) DoD Directive 5230.0, "Clearance of DoD Information for Public Release," April 2, 1982
- (g) DoD Directive 5120.20, "Armed Forces Radio and Television Service (AFRTS)," December 17, 1991
- (h) DoD Instruction 5405.3, "Development of Proposed Public Affairs Guidance," April 5, 1991
- (i) "The Freedom of Information Act," as amended (5 U.S.C. 522a)
- (j) "The Privacy Act of 1974," (5 U.S.C. 552a)

## DEFINITIONS

1. Active Public Affairs Policy. Open dissemination of information to inform the news media and public about an issue or activity. An active approach is characterized by announcing the event or addressing the issue through news media advisories, news releases, personal contacts, news conferences, or other forms of public presentation. Such a policy encourages and supports news media coverage.
2. Command Information. Those public affairs programs that address issues of interest to active duty, National Guard, and Reserve service members and their families, as well as civilian employees of the Department of Defense, and other internal audiences. Topics focus on the direction of the organization, its mission, individual roles, organizational activities, and current events.
3. Community Relations. Those public affairs programs that address issues of interest to the general public, business, veterans and Service organizations, military-related associations, and other non-news media entities.
4. Ground Rules. Conditions established by a military command to govern the conduct of news gathering and the release and/or use of specified information during an operation or during a specific period of time.
5. Joint Combat Camera. Visual information documentation covering air, sea, and ground actions of Armed Forces in combat or combat support operations, in humanitarian operations, and in related peacetime training activities such as exercises, war games, and operations in support of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Unified Combatant Commands.
6. Joint Information Bureau (JIB). A facility established by the joint commander to serve as the focal point for the interface between the military and the media during the conduct of joint operations. Its purpose is to provide the news media with timely and accurate information on command issues, events, and operations. It also serves as the infrastructure for providing necessary equipment, transportation, and communications assets to support public affairs activities and media coverage efforts. When operated in support of combined operations, a JIB is called a Combined Information Bureau (CIB) or an Allied Press Information Center (APIC). A JIB shall be staffed by public affairs personnel from the Services represented in the joint force and by support personnel. Participating Services may establish their own information bureaus, subordinate to the JIB, to disseminate information about their particular missions. A CIB or an APIC

shall be staffed by public affairs personnel from those nations participating in the combined operation.

7. Media Pool. A limited number of news media who represent a larger number of news media organizations for news gathering and sharing of material during a specified activity. Pooling is typically used when news media support resources cannot accommodate a large number of journalists. The DoD National Media Pool (DODNMP) is available for coverage of the earliest stages of a contingency. Additionally, the combatant commanders may find it necessary to form limited local pools to report on specific missions.

8. Passive or Responsive Public Affairs Policy. A passive or responsive posture is one in which no direct effort is made to participate in the public discussion about an issue or activity. When a passive or responsive policy is in effect, authorities must be prepared to respond to news media inquiries about the issue or activity and to make brief statements to avoid confusion, speculation, misunderstanding, or false information that may prevail if news media queries go unanswered.

9. Public Affairs. Those public information, command information, and community relations activities directed toward both the external and internal publics with interest in the Department of Defense.

10. Public Affairs Assessment. An analysis of the news media and public environments to evaluate the degree of understanding about strategic and/or operational objectives and military activities and to identify levels of public support. Includes judgments about the public affairs impact of pending decisions and recommendations about the structure of public affairs support for the assigned mission.

11. Public Affairs Guidance (PAG). Normally, a package of information to support the public discussion of defense issues and operations. Such guidance can range from a telephonic response to a specific question to a more comprehensive package. Included could be an approved public affairs policy (see definitions 1. and 8., above), news statements, answers to anticipated media questions, and community relations guidance. The PAG also addresses the method(s), timing, location, and other details governing the release of information to the public.

12. Public Information. Those public affairs programs that emphasize communicating with the general public as a mass audience.

13. Security Review. The process of reviewing news media products at some point, usually before transmission, to ensure that no oral, written, or visual information is filed for publication.

or broadcast that would divulge classified national security information or would jeopardize ongoing or future operations or that would threaten the safety of the force.

### **PRINCIPLES OF INFORMATION**

It is the policy of the Department of Defense to make available timely and accurate information so that the public, Congress and the news media may assess and understand the facts about national security and defense strategy. Requests for information from organizations and private citizens will be answered in a timely manner. In carrying out this policy, the following principles of information will apply:

1. Information will be made fully and readily available, consistent with statutory requirements, unless its release is precluded by current and valid security classification. The provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (reference (i)) and The Privacy Act of 1974 (reference (j)) shall be supported in both letter and spirit.
2. A free flow of general and military information will be made available, without censorship or propaganda, to the men and women of the Armed Forces and their dependents.
3. Information will not be classified or otherwise withheld to protect the government from criticism or embarrassment.
4. Information will be withheld only when disclosure would adversely affect national security or threaten the safety or privacy of the men and women of the Armed Forces.
5. The Department's obligation to provide the public with information on its major programs may require detailed public affairs planning and coordination within the Department and with other Government Agencies. The sole purpose of such activity is to expedite the flow of information to the public; propaganda has no place in DoD public affairs programs.

### **DoD PRINCIPLES FOR NEWS MEDIA COVERAGE OF DoD OPERATIONS**

The "DoD Principles for News Media Coverage of DoD Operations," as stated in enclosure 3 of DoD Directive 5122.5 (reference (b)), establish direction for future arrangements for news coverage of the U.S. military in joint operations and provide guidance for the planning, resourcing, and execution of supporting public affairs activities.

1. Open and independent reporting will be the principle means of coverage of U.S. military operations.

2. Pools are not to serve as the standard means of covering U.S. military operations. Pools may sometimes provide the only feasible means of early access to a military operation. Pools should be as large as possible and disbanded at the earliest opportunity -- within 24 to 36 hours when possible. The arrival of early-access pools will not cancel the principle of independent coverage for journalists already in the area.

3. Even under conditions of open coverage, pools may be appropriate for specific events, such as those at extremely remote locations or where space is limited.

4. Journalists in a combat zone will be credentialed by the U.S. military and will be required to abide by a clear set of military security ground rules that protect U.S. forces and their operations. Violation of the ground rules can result in suspension of credentials and expulsion from the combat zone of the journalist involved. News organizations will make their best efforts to assign experienced journalists to combat operations and to make them familiar with U.S. military operations.

5. Journalists will be provided access to all major military units. Special operations restrictions may limit access in some cases.

6. Military public affairs officers should act as liaisons but should not interfere with the reporting process.

7. Under conditions of open coverage, field commanders should be instructed to permit journalists to ride on military vehicles and aircraft whenever possible. The military will be responsible for the transportation of pools.

8. Consistent with its capabilities, the military supply public affairs officers with facilities to enable timely, secure, compatible transmission of pool material and will make these facilities available whenever possible for filing independent coverage. In cases when government facilities are unavailable, journalists will, as always, file by any other means

available. The military will not ban communications systems operated by news organizations, but electromagnetic operational security in battlefield situations may require limited restrictions on the use of such systems.

9. These principles will apply as well to the operations of the standing Department of Defense National Media Pool system.

## **GENERIC PUBLIC AFFAIRS RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS**

A. **FACILITIES**. It is necessary to set up facilities for the functioning of the public affairs infrastructure and for the work of the news media covering any joint or unilateral operation. As a minimum, that requirement most probably includes the establishment and operation of a JIB. Should a CIB or an APIC become appropriate, similar facilities would also be necessary. Specific requirements include staff and news media work areas, equipment storage and photo lab spaces, vehicle parks, and helicopter landing sites. Additionally, work areas are necessary for those personnel conducting the community relations and command information missions. Arrangements for the billeting and feeding of military and DoD civilian personnel working at the information centers are also important to the accomplishment of the public affairs mission.

B. **PERSONNEL**. Once an operation begins, the peacetime staffing of an organization's PAO will be inadequate to respond to the inevitable increase in news media and public interest. It is essential that contingency planning address the need for the rapid expansion of the public affairs staff to meet this challenge, especially in the earliest stages of the deployment. While the organization's public affairs personnel shall form the core of the effort, their reinforcement must become a high priority. That can be accomplished in the following ways:

1. **By Public Affairs Units**. In developing operational plans, commanders shall coordinate with the Military Departments and the supporting combatant commanders to identify those Reserve component organizations with specific public affairs skills and capabilities to assist in the public affairs effort. Their deployment at the earliest stages of the operation is crucial to the overall success of the joint, combined, or unilateral mission. On arrival, such units would be subordinate to the joint-force PAO. Members of those organizations should train regularly in various exercise scenarios and should be provided with sufficient dedicated equipment, transportation, and communications support to accomplish their missions of media relations, community relations, and command information.

2. **By Individuals**. It shall also be necessary to deploy individual public affairs personnel, active duty and individual mobilization augmentees from supporting combatant commands and Military Department assets. To the extent possible, those individuals should be identified, by position, in advance and matched to specific requirements in support of each contingency plan. Exercising such a reinforcement scheme is important to refining operational procedures and understanding the complex missions of the combatant commands they are supporting.

C. EQUIPMENT. The news media who cover any joint operation will be outfitted with the most modern and efficient equipment. Commanders must ensure that the public affairs infrastructure in place to support the joint mission is, to the extent possible, compatible. Much of that equipment must be provided by the responsible combatant commander. This is especially true in support of the DoD National Media Pool, the command's primary JIB, and those assets necessary to support the mission in its earliest stages. Subsequent resource needs should be met by balanced support provided by the responsible CINC, the supporting combatant commanders, and the Military Departments. The planning process should precisely identify the public affairs infrastructure requirements inherent to each contingency and then gain dedicated commitments to provide them. The early introduction into the operational area of the following assets is crucial to meeting the public affairs objectives of the larger operational mission:

1. Materials for the direct support of the public affairs staff and JIB operations:

- a. Personnel computers to include laptop systems.
- b. Word processors.
- c. Printers.
- d. Modems.
- e. CD-ROM players.
- f. Software and blank disks.
- g. Photocopier machine(s) and access to offset printing capability.
- h. Furniture to support multiple work areas (if appropriate).
- i. Visual Information, audiovisual, and sound reinforcement equipment.
- j. Professional quality still and video cameras and video recorders and playback systems (film, dark room equipment, digital electronic imaging equipment).
- k. Typewriters.
- l. Appropriate directional and information signs.
- m. Tape recorders, AM-FM radios.
- n. Blank audio and video tapes.
- o. Appropriate operations orders.
- p. PAG.
- q. Service directives; DoD Directives.
- r. 110 and 220 voltage electrical power converters.
- s. Office supplies.
- t. Maps.
- u. Position locators and Navigational equipment.
- v. Power generators.
- w. News Sources, as follows:
  - (1) Television and Radio receivers (portable and/or battery operated, preferably).

(2) Wire services.

(3) Newspapers.

x. Armed Forces Satellite Transmitted Radio Service portable (briefcase) receivers.

2. While communications requirements will vary in each situation, the following capabilities, formed in an appropriate mix, shall be necessary to support public affairs requirements:

- a. Telephone lines with international access.
- b. Secure communications.
- c. Cellular hand-held phones.
- d. Mobile radios.
- e. Answering machines.
- f. Pagers.
- g. Facsimile machines.
- h. Satellite telephones.
- i. Satellite uplink and downlink facilities.

3. The mobility of the public affairs effort must match that of the operational forces to ensure the necessary level of news media coverage. A package of dedicated transportation assets, in a combination appropriate to the assigned operation, shall include the following capabilities:

- a. Vehicles to support public affairs administrative and logistics activities (with drivers and communications).
- b. Vehicles to support the movement of news media pools (with drivers and communications).
- c. Aircraft to support the movement of news media pools.
- d. Surface and air transportation to assist in the movement and filing of media products.

(Maintenance and service provisions should be in place to ensure sustainability of the complete resource packages. Rental contracts may be appropriate in some cases to ensure current technology and maintenance support.)

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Report by CJCS MEDIA-MILITARY RELATIONS PANEL (SIDLE PANEL)**

#### **Recommendations**

##### **Statement of Principle**

The American people must be informed about United States military operations and this information can best be provided through both the media and the Government. Therefore, the panel believes it is essential that the U.S. news media cover U.S. military operations to the maximum degree possible consistent with mission security and the safety of U.S. forces.

The principle extends the major "Principles of Information" promulgated by the Secretary of Defense on 1 December 1983, which said:

It is the policy of the Department of Defense to make available timely and accurate information so that the public, Congress, and members representing the press, radio and television may assess and understand the facts about national security and defense strategy. Requests for information from organizations and private citizens will be answered responsively and as rapidly as possible.

It should be noted that the above statement is in consonance with similar policies publicly stated by the most former secretaries of defense.

The panel's statement of principle is also generally consistent with the first two paragraphs contained in "A Statement of Principle on Press Access to Military Operations" issued on 10 January 1984 by 10 major news organizations.... These were:

First, the highest civilian and military officers of the government should reaffirm the historic principle that American journalists, print and broadcast, with their professional equipment, should be present at U.S. military operations. And the news media should reaffirm their recognition of the importance of U.S. military mission security and troop safety. When essential, both groups can agree on coverage conditions which satisfy safety and security imperatives while, in keeping with the spirit of the First Amendment, permitting independent reporting to the citizens of our free and open society to whom our government is ultimately accountable.

Second, the highest civilian and military officers of the U.S. government should reaffirm that military plans should include planning for press access, in keeping with past traditions. The expertise of government public affairs officers during the planning of recent Grenada military operations could have met the interests of both the military and the press, to everyone's benefit.

Application of the panel's principle should be adopted both in substance and in spirit. This will make it possible better to meet the needs of both the military and the

media during future military operations. The following recommendations by the panel are designed to help make this happen. They are primarily general in nature in view of the almost endless number of variations in military operations that could occur. However, the panel believes that they provide the necessary flexibility and broad guidance to cover almost all situations.

***Recommendation 1:***

That public affairs planning for military operations be conducted concurrently with operational planning. This can be assured in the great majority of cases by implementing the following:

- a. Review all joint planning documents to assure that JCS guidance in public affairs matters is adequate.
- b. When sending implementing orders to Commanders in Chief in the field, direct CINC planners to include consideration of public information aspects.
- c. Inform the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs) of an impending military operation at the earliest possible time. This information should appropriately come from the Secretary of Defense.
- d. Complete the plan, currently being studied, to include a public affairs planning cell in OJCS to help ensure adequate public affairs review of CINC plans.
- e. Insofar as possible and appropriate, institutionalize these steps in written guidance or policy.

***Recommendation 2:***

When it becomes apparent during military operational planning that news media pooling provides the only feasible means of furnishing the media with early access to an operation, planning should provide for the largest possible press pool that is practical and minimize the length of time the pool will be necessary before "full coverage" is feasible.

***Recommendation 3:***

That, in connection with the use of pools, the Joint Chiefs of Staff recommend to the Secretary of Defense that he study the matter of whether to use a pre-established and constantly updated accreditation or notification list of correspondents in case of a military operation for which a pool is required or the establishment of a news agency list for use in the same circumstances.

***Recommendation 4:***

That a basic tenet governing media access to military operations should be voluntary compliance by the media with security guidelines or ground rules established and issue by the military. These rules should be as few as possible and should be worked out during the planning process for each operation. Violations would mean exclusion of the correspondent(s) concerned from further coverage of the operation.

***Recommendation 5:***

Public Affairs planning for military operations should include sufficient equipment and qualified military personnel whose function is to assist correspondents in covering the operation adequately.

***Recommendation 6:***

Planners should carefully consider media communications requirements to assure the earliest feasible availability. However, these communications must not interfere with combat and combat support operations. If necessary and feasible, plans should include communications facilities dedicated to the news media.

***Recommendation 7:***

Planning factors should include provision for intra- and inter-theater transportation support of the media.

***Recommendation 8:***

To improve media-military understanding and cooperation:

- a. CJCS should recommend to the Secretary of Defense that a program be undertaken by ASD(PA) for top military public affairs representatives to meet with news organization leadership, to include meetings with individual news organizations, on a reasonably regular basis to discuss mutual problems, including relationships with the media during military operations and exercises. This program should begin as soon as possible.
- b. Enlarge programs already underway to improve military understanding of the media via public affairs Instruction in service schools, to include media participation when possible.
- c. Seek improved media understanding of the military through more visits by commanders and line officers to news organizations.
- d. CJCS should recommend that the Secretary of Defense host at an early date a working meeting with representatives of the broadcast news media to explore the special problems of ensuring military security when and if there is real-time or near real-time news media audiovisual coverage of a battlefield and, if special problems exist, how they can best be dealt with consistent with the basic principle set for at the beginning of this section of the report.

The panel members fully support the statement of principle and the supporting recommendations listed above and so indicate by their signatures below:

Winant Sidle, CHAIRMAN  
*Major General, USA, Retired*  
Brent Baker, *Captain, USN*  
Keyes Beech  
Scott M. Cutlip  
John T. Halbert  
Billy Hunt  
George Kirschenbauer, *Colonel, USA*

A. J. Langguth  
Fred C. Lash, *Major, USMC*  
James Major, *Captain, USN*  
Wendell S. Merick  
Robert O'Brien, *Colonel, USAF*  
Deputy Assistant Secretary of  
Defense (Public Affairs)  
Richard S. Salant  
Barry Zorthian

## APPENDIX C

### HOFFMAN REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS DECEMBER 1989

-The Secretary of Defense should issue a policy directive, to be circulated throughout the Department and the Armed Services, stating explicitly his official sponsorship of the media pool and requiring full support for it. That policy statement should make it clear to all that the pool must be given every assistance to report combat by U.S. troops from the start of the operations.

-All operational plans drafted by the Joint Staff must have an annex spelling out measures to assure that the pool will move with the lead elements of U.S. forces and cover the earliest stages of operations. This principle should be incorporated in overall public affairs plans.

-A Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs should closely monitor development of operation-related public affairs plans to assure they fulfill all requirements for pool coverage. The Assistant Secretary of Defense Public Affairs should review all such plans. In advance of military action, those plans should be briefed to the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff along with the operation plans.

Public affairs staff officers and key staff personnel representing policy offices, such as International Security Affairs, should be brought into the planning process at the very earliest stage. The practice of keeping key staff officers with high security clearances out of the planning process in order to limit access to sensitive information should be followed only sparingly and eliminated where possible.

-In the runup to a military operation, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff should send out a message ordering all commanders to give full cooperation to the media pool and its escorts. This requirement should be spelled out unambiguously and should reach down through all the echelons in the chain of command. Such a message should make clear that necessary resources, such as helicopters, ground vehicles, communications equipment, etc., must be earmarked specifically for pool use, that the pool must have ready access to the earliest action and that the safety of the pool members must not be used as a reason to keep the pool from action.

-The ASD(PA) must be prepared to weigh in aggressively with the Secretary of Defense and the JCS Chairman where necessary to overcome any secrecy or other obstacles blocking prompt deployment of a pool to the scene of action.

-After a pool has been deployed, the ASD(PA) must be kept informed in a timely fashion of any hitches that may arise. He must be prepared to act immediately, to

contact the JCS Chairman, the Joint Staff Director of Operations and other senior officers who can serve to break through any obstacles to the pool. The ASD(PA) should call on the Defense Secretary for help as needed.

- The ASD(PA) should study a proposal by several of the Panama poolers that future pools deploy in two sections. The first section would be very small and would include only reporters and photographers. The second section, coming later, would bring supporting gear, such as satellite uplink equipment.

- The national media pool should never again be herded as a single unwieldy unit. It should be broken up after arriving at the scene of action to cover a wider spectrum of the story and then be reassembled periodically to share the reporting results.

- The pool should be exercised at least once during each quarterly rotation with airborne and other types of military units most likely to be sent on emergency combat missions.

- During deployments, there should be regular briefings for pool newsmen and newswomen by senior operations officers so the poolers will have an up-to-date and complete overview of the progress of an operation they are covering.

- There is an urgent need for restructuring of the organization which has the responsibility for handling pool reports sent to the Pentagon for processing and distribution. The ASD(PA) must assure that there is adequate staffing and enough essential equipment to handle the task. The Director of Plans, so long as he has this responsibility, should clearly assign contingency duties among his staff to ensure timely handling of reporters from the pool. Staffers from the Administration Office, Community Relations and other divisions of OASD(PA) should be mobilized to help in such a task as needed.

- The ASD(PA) should give serious consideration to a suggestion by some of the pool members to create a new pool slot for an editor who would come to the Pentagon during a deployment to lend professional journalism help to the staff officers handling pool reports. Such a pool editor could edit copy, question content where indicated and help expedite distribution of the reports.

- The pool escorting system needs overhauling as well. There is no logical reason for the Washington-based escorts to be drawn from the top of the OASD(PA) Plans Division. The head of that division should remain in Washington to oversee getting out the pool products.

Pool escorts should be drawn from the most appropriate service, rather than limiting escort duty to officers of the Plans Division. The individual armed service public affairs offices should be required to assign military officers to the pool on a contingency basis. For example, if it's an Army operation, the escorts should be primarily Army officers. In the Panama deployment, the three Washington-based

escorts wore Air Force and Navy uniforms in what was an overwhelmingly Army operation.

Escorts should deploy in field uniforms or draw them from field commands soon after arriving. The Panama pool escorts wore uniforms befitting a day behind the desk at the Pentagon and this, I found, had a jarring effect on the Army people with whom they dealt.

-The ASD(PA) should close a major gap in the current system by requiring all pool participant organizations -- whether print, still photo, TV or radio -- to share all pool products with all elements of the news industry. Pool participants must understand they represent the entire industry.

Any pool participant refusing to share with all legitimate requesters should be dropped from the pool and replaced by another organization that agrees to abide by time honored pool practices.

-There is merit in a suggestion by one of the pool photographers that participating news organizations share the cost of equipment, such as a portable dark room and a negative transmitter, which could be stored at Andrews AFB for ready access in a deployment. Other equipment essential for smooth transmission of pool products, such as satellite up-link gear, might also be acquired and stored in the same manner.

-All pool-assigned reporters and photographers, not only bureau chiefs, should attend quarterly Pentagon sessions where problems can be discussed and rules and responsibilities underscored.

-Public Affairs Officers from Unified Commands should meet periodically with pool-assigned reporters and photographers with whom they might have to work in some future crises.

## APPENDIX D

### Interview Agenda for Military Representatives

1. Name/Duty Title.
2. Organization/Location.
3. What is your military background (years of service/public affairs experience)?
4. Are you familiar with the new DoD Instruction, "Procedures for Joint Public Affairs Operations," which, in part, addresses media access to military operations?
5. The new Instruction states that allowing "open and independent coverage" is the primary goal when granting media access to military operations. How would you define open and independent coverage?
6. In your opinion, does the new Instruction clearly define "open and independent coverage" enough to avoid conflicts in the future?
7. The new doctrine does not exclude the use of pools. In fact, it did not retain the 24- to 36-hour time limitation for pools. What are your thoughts on this?
8. How will the continued use of pools affect independent and improvisational coverage? Are pools and independent coverage compatible ideas?
9. The new policy states that "security at the source" instead of security review will be the main method of maintaining operational security. How do you define "security at the source"?
10. How do military members ensure commanders opt for "security at the source" instead of security review?
11. In your opinion, does the new Instruction clearly articulate "security at the source" for all parties (media, military) involved?
12. It has been said that the military will be forced to resort to pools as the main vehicle for access to military operations unless a numerical limitation (and accreditation system) is placed on reporters. The new policy does not address this issue. What are your thoughts on this? Is the military interested in pursuing such a policy?
13. In your opinion, should this be addressed in a future iteration of this Instruction?

14. The issue of media capability of real-time coverage has cropped up several times since Grenada, but has never been officially addressed (even in the current policy). How has the advent of real-time capability affected public affairs operations?
15. What are the implications for the military's operational concerns and media policies?
16. Do you think real-time coverage give citizens an accurate perspective of the overall operation, or does it contribute to sensational reporting?
17. In your opinion, what are your thoughts on the failure of the military to address this issue in the current Instruction?
18. U.S. operations are increasingly multinational in nature, yet the new policy does not clearly address how public affairs officers should handle the differences between allied, and U.N. approaches to media access to operations. Do/should units assigned to U.N. operations follow U.N. public affairs guidance or U.S. public affairs guidance?
19. In the past, public affairs officers have complained about a lack of adequate equipment, facilities, and supplies to operate joint information bureaus in a proper manner. The new Instruction addresses this issue. In practice, has this issue been completely resolved? If so, how? If not, why not?

## APPENDIX E

### Interview Agenda for Media Representatives

1. Name/Duty Title.
2. Organization/Location.
3. What is your background, particularly in covering defense-related issues and military operations?
4. Are you familiar with the new DoD Instruction, "Procedures for Joint Public Affairs Operations," which, in part, addresses media access to military operations?
5. The new Instruction states that allowing "open and independent coverage" is the primary goal when granting media access to military operations. How would you define open and independent coverage?
6. In your opinion, does the new Instruction clearly define "open and independent coverage" enough to avoid conflicts in the future?
7. The new doctrine does not exclude the use of pools. In fact, it did not retain the 24- to 36-hour time limitation for pools. What are your thoughts on this?
8. How will the continued use of pools affect independent and improvisational coverage? Are pools and independent coverage compatible ideas?
9. The new policy states that "security at the source" instead of security review will be the main method of maintaining operational security. How do you define "security at the source"?
10. In your opinion, does the new Instruction clearly articulate "security at the source" for all parties (media, military) involved?
11. It has been said that the military will be forced to resort to pools as the main vehicle for access to military operations unless a numerical limitation (and accreditation system) is placed on reporters. The new policy does not address this issue. What are your thoughts on this? Are members of the media interested in pursuing such a policy?
12. The issue of media capability of real-time coverage has cropped up several times since Grenada, but has never been officially addressed (even in the current policy). How has the advent of real-time capability affected media coverage of operations?

13. What are the implications for the military's operational concerns and media policies?
14. Is real-time coverage necessary during times of war? Do you think real-time coverage give citizens an accurate perspective of the overall operation, or does it contribute to sensational reporting?
15. In your opinion, what are your thoughts on the failure of the military and the media to address this issue during the DoD Principles for News Media Coverage in 1992 and in the current Instruction?
16. U.S. operations are increasingly multinational in nature, yet the new policy does not clearly address how the military should handle the differences between allied, and U.N. approaches to media access to operations. What are your impressions of the success of media access to multinational operations?

## APPENDIX F

### Interview Subjects

#### Media Representatives

Frank Aukofer, Washington bureau chief, *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*

Malcom W. Browne, senior writer, *New York Times*

Jim Clancy, international correspondent/anchor, CNN

Joseph L. Galloway, senior writer, *US News & World Report*

William Headline, vice president, CNN

David Martin, national security correspondent, CBS News

John McWethy, national security correspondent, ABC News

Dana Priest, Pentagon correspondent, *Washington Post*

Rick Sallinger, news reporter, KCNC-TV Denver

Jonathan Wolman, Washington bureau chief, *Associated Press*

#### Military Representatives

Lieutenant Colonel Jereon Brown, chief of public affairs, 3rd Wing, Elmendorf AFB, Alaska

Colonel Mike Gallagher, special assistant to the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Pentagon

Brian Kilgallen, plans officer, Office of the Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, Pentagon

Chief Master Sergeant Joe Lavigne, chief of Air Force Enlisted Public Affairs Assignments, Randolph AFB, Texas

Captain James W. Law, public affairs officer/graduate student, University of Florida, Florida

Captain Casey Mahon, chief of community relations, Air Force Academy, Colorado

Captain Tracy O'Grady-Walsh, chief of public affairs, 31st Fighter Wing, Aviano AB, Italy

Captain John Paradis, chief of public affairs, 16th Special Operations Wing, Hurlburt Field, Florida

Colonel Virginia Pribyla, chief of media relations, United States Air Force, Pentagon

Colonel Ray B. Shepherd, director of public affairs, United States Air Forces in Europe, Ramstein AB, Germany

Lieutenant Colonel Bob Williams, director of public affairs, Air Force Flight Test Center, Edwards AFB, California

## APPENDIX G

### Interview Excerpts

***Frank Aukofer, Washington Bureau Chief, Washington Post:***

Open and independent coverage means that the military welcomes any correspondents or anybody who wants to come and cover [a military operation]. If you have a military operation some place and somebody from a news organization or perhaps a freelance writer ...wants to come into the theater of operations to cover the war....they [the military] accommodate [them] as best they can. They accommodate them without...arbitrarily denying access or by trying to exercise any kind of field censorship.

***Lieutenant Colonel Jereon Brown, Chief of Public Affairs, 3rd Wing, Elmendorf AFB, Alaska:***

I think you have some problems with pools in that...the heavyweights usually throw their weight around, and they end up with more bodies on the pool. For example, you're not going to say no if Dan Rather wants to be on a media pool. The military can't afford to say no. You're not going to tell CNN or *USA Today* that "we don't have room on the pool for you" or "you have to wait your turn." Whereas you've got some of the local newspapers -- and it's just as important, for example, for a newspaper from Syracuse to be able to go and cover their local troops. But that doesn't occur. So, you end up with some independents and a lot of freelancers coming anyway...If we've got limited resources, we tend to lean toward getting the most bang for the buck. Well, I get more bang for the buck from CNN as opposed to the *Anchorage Daily News*.

***Malcom W. Browne, Senior Writer, New York Times:***

The question of whether there should be...access to battlefields depends on whether the Pentagon can control access to battlefields or not. In the case of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Iraq, the Pentagon could control access to battlefields because...it was simply a desert. There were very few roads. Travel from one place to another was exceedingly difficult unless there was military assistance. The opposite extreme was Indochina where one could get anywhere by car or on one's own. I mean, if you ran into a Viet Cong ambush, you had problems. But nevertheless, the battlefields such as it -- I'm using the metaphorical sense, not a real sense, because real battlefields were pretty far and few between in Vietnam. But the control of combat areas by any military, be it Viet Cong or American or South Vietnamese, was virtually impossible.

***Jim Clancy, International Correspondent/Anchor, CNN:***

With the advent of live television, there are new risks and new responsibilities. We can now go live from anywhere. All I need is a flatbed truck and I can go live from anywhere. That technology is only going to get smaller and better. I'm going to become more and more portable in terms of where I can take my equipment and set up my uplink that would enable me to feed out live pictures around the world. There are times when I might not want or intend to show outgoing rounds or location of artillery or something like that, but the camera catches it. And while I might not be able to look at the television screen and tell where that is coming from, it's inevitable that somebody watching the television can. This is one of the risks that we're facing with advances in technology.

***Colonel Mike Gallagher, Special Assistant for Public Affairs to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Pentagon:***

We had over 550,000 troops in Desert Storm with 1,600 reporters [registered at the Joint Information Bureau]. For our operation in Bosnia, we had -- with less than 20,000 troops going into Bosnia -- over 1,600 reporters signed up. So you can see it's going up and up and up. It appears that because of the explosion in the number and types of media, that it's going to get out of hand if some kind of limit is not put on the numbers in future conflicts. So, unfortunately -- and I wish this wasn't the case -- it looks like there will be times when we're going to have to limit the numbers that are going to go into a theater or go into an area of operation.

***Joseph L. Galloway, Senior Writer, US News & World Report:***

My personal concern would be covering American forces as always, and I would probably prefer to follow American rules. If it's an UN-flagged operation and you've got an American commander wearing a blue beret, I guess you follow the rules that are laid down. But you get into all sorts of things when it's multinational. You get into the situation that we had in the Gulf where the British correspondents who were accredited had total access to the British forces. We had no access to those forces, because we were not accredited by the British Ministry of Defence. And so they had that locked up -- an exclusive for themselves. And in the meantime, they demanded access to the other pools to cover the other forces, which I thought was ingenious -- or disingenuous, one or the other. These are things that should have been addressed in the six-month leadup to the war, but never really were... That's an unresolved situation and I think as you have multinational operations, it will happen more often.

***William Headline, Vice President, CNN:***

Security at the source -- there are probably in infinite number of definitions, depending on the circumstances. I guess I would generally define it as in-theater review at the lowest level that can pass judgment on whether something violates classification or

does not. If a field commander can make the judgment, then he ought to make the judgment and not have it bumped upstairs and upstairs and upstairs, which is generally viewed, rightly or wrongly, by us as simply a way of screwing us...keeping non-lethal material out of circulation long enough so that it loses its news value.

***Brian Kilgallen, Plans Officer, Office of the Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, Pentagon:***

The media don't like pooling...they would rather be there themselves. The second thing is we don't like pooling. It's kind of a necessary evil. Even when I was a news correspondent myself, there were times when you had to pool because it was the only way you were going to get a story. When there is no access, when other media can't get into a particular place, you can get say 13 people and let them get the story, but the idea is to disband it as quickly as possible.

***Chief Master Sergeant Joe Lavigne, Chief of Air Force Enlisted Public Affairs Assignments, Randolph AFB, Texas:***

Maximum access to me would mean, if I had a reporter with me, I'd take him to every location where, number one, I wouldn't be jeopardizing the safety of my people, and number two, I wouldn't be jeopardizing the safety of the reporter, to be quite honest with you. Conversely, because we're in such an age of electronic media and instant access and everybody goes to the battlefield -- the media always have their Inmarsats and their cell phones up and running before [we] do. You risk the element of surprise against an adversary if you allow [the media] to access every portion of an operation.

***Captain James W. Law, Public Affairs Officer/Graduate Student, University of Florida:***

Security at the source isn't a bottom-up decision. It's a top-down decision. Department of Defense Public Affairs has to convince people that this is the way it should happen. Then the Secretary of Defense issues a directive to all DoD commanders that this is the policy. This is the only way it will work. Otherwise, only those field public affairs officers who convince their commanders to utilize security at the source will do it and there will be no consistency from operation to operation.

***Captain Casey Mahon, Chief Community Relations, Air Force Academy, Colorado:***

U.S. policy does not dictate other nation's roles. I don't think it's our place as one nation to tell nations what they can and cannot do in terms of the press. It's got to be unified. And the other part about it that runs a risk is that you kind of get back into cultural sensitivities of each nation. For example, Saudi Arabia has a totally different attitude about what goes in the press than what we do. I mean, there's no freedom of

speech there. I think the only possible what that it could work is to have the same set of rules as the political and military do.

***David Martin, National Security Correspondent, CBS News:***

[A numerical limitation] doesn't strike me as terribly realistic. We've sort of, in some ways, created this problem for ourselves because we sort of have no restraint in terms of -- when there's a big story, in terms of sending people. And then we simply overwhelm, the ability of the military to accommodate us. And this is not something that hurts a news organization like CBS, particularly, because of the number of people we reach and the networks are always going to be sort of at the top of everybody's list to be included on whatever the operation is. The people that it hurts are the smaller news organizations who can't throw their weight around and they don't have much viewership or readership to claim. Of course, everybody knows sometimes those are the people who do the best coverage. I don't know how you work around it, but I don't think it's realistic to say "Alright, we're setting a limit -- 200 reporters." There's no mechanism for deciding who those 200 are going to be.

***John McWethy, National Security Correspondent, ABC News:***

The American military learned a lot of lessons from Somalia. When they were designing how [to] give access to the press for Haiti, they had come, in my opinion, a thousand miles. They had made a lot of progress and they took many of the lessons learned from Somalia and they embedded those lessons in the design of press access to Haiti. There were reporters in virtually every unit of any size that was about to be in the invasion. However, there were a lot of reporters on the ground before the U.S. military ever arrived. Whether or not it was hostile, we would have gotten the story. And the military discovered, "Golly, well we can influence this story and maybe get a better shake if we have at least some percentage of reporters with our units.

***Captain Tracy O'Grady-Walsh, Chief of Public Affairs, 31st Fighter Wing, Aviano AB, Italy:***

I think live, real-time coverage is stupid. And it looks stupid when [the media] do it [like they did] when the camera's in the faces of the troops when they hit the beach. At some point, the security of the mission and our troops has to come before the networks' ratings. For example, I definitely want them covering missions as they occur, but I don't want them broadcasting it until the pilots have completed their mission or are at least on their way back and out of Bosnia (or wherever the hot spot is). And I don't want them with the families while their spouse are out on missions.

***Captain John Paradis, Chief of Public Affairs, 16th Special Operations Wing, Hurlburt Field, Florida:***

Security at the source, if it works right, is supposed to reach all levels of a unit. It should be from the commander on down to his or her troops. And what it involves is the commander briefing his people on what the operational security requirements are so that they understand what they can and cannot talk to the media about. That's security at the source. Does it always work? No, it doesn't always work, and that's where you're going to have a lot of problems of the so-called open access or what I call embedded media. If they're adequately briefed and the PAO and the commander are doing their jobs, it works fine. But there should be no hesitation on the part of the public affairs network that there is going to be those folks that, for whatever reason, have an ax to grind and may talk negatively about a mission or about their role in a mission. If this is what our marching orders are, it's got to be clear that we're going to take the good with the bad.

***Colonel Virginia Pribyla, Chief of Media Relations, United States Air Force, Pentagon:***

I can promise you right now that we will continue to use pools. The biggest reason for that is the fact that the media have not been as constrained in growing as we have. Indeed, while we've been exercising the drawdown, the media -- the legitimate media -- have proliferated at an incredible rate. There is no way that military forces are going to be able to allow access if, for no other reason than sheer space, to all of those people who are going to show up at the fight. Tuzla was an example. You had CNN, ABC, NBC and all the networks buying houses outside the base. And there were 1,600 news media registered in Tuzla with the UN. There were only 1,600 allowed in to cover Desert Storm. So just the sheer access based on the numbers who are going to want to be there and going to want to cover [military operations] are going to drive pools.

***Dana Priest, Pentagon Correspondent, Washington Post:***

The only instance I've deployed with the military is my recent trip to Bosnia. I was given what I think is fairly free access. No one denied me anything. I wanted to attend the daily briefings for commanders. They talked to the commander about it and that was permitted. And in one case, there was some information that was probably classified. They asked me not to reveal it. That was fine.

***Rick Sallinger, News Reporter, KCNC-TV, Denver:***

We had good access in both places [Somalia and Yugoslavia]. But even if you have the UN credentials when you're in a multinational operation, you get a great deal of disparity depending on which multinational force you're dealing with. For example, the Americans might welcome us with open arms, but the Russians would not. In fact,

that was exactly the case in Yugoslavia. We had very little access to Russian troops that were there in Serbia. While they may be wearing blue helmets and may be under UN command, they are still the force of that particular nation and each nation reacts differently to the news media.

***Colonel Ray Shepherd, Director of Public Affairs, United States Air Forces in Europe:***

[Open and independent coverage means] making coverage of military operations available to the media (excluding classified operations). This generally means the PA will act as a facilitator in connecting the media with the operation, providing interviews and photo opportunities. This is done on a non-interference basis for the media and the military operations. Journalists are free to travel, cover, and interview whomever they desire. Interviews are conducted with the permission of the individual. Military personnel will not interfere with journalists.

***Lieutenant Colonel Bob Williams, Director of Public Affairs, Air Force Flight Test Center, Edwards AFB, California:***

The fact remains that we're in an instantaneous information exchange right now and the military has to operate in that environment. News is made all over the world and it's reported the same day all over the world. [Take] the Marines. They view the news media as another element of the fog of war, just like weather, just like confusion, just like communications breakdowns or anything else. It's another thing you have to deal with and another aspect of the battlefield.

***Jonathan Wolman, Washington Bureau Chief, Associated Press:***

The news media have acknowledged for many years that there are some very specific circumstances under which pooling would be necessary and in which the news media were prepared to cooperate...a combat deployment that was being prepared in secret and for which it was necessary to have a small news group which would also deploy under rules of operational security. And there would also be some circumstances in which space limitations might create the need for a media pool. And in many circumstances the media and the Pentagon have agreed that these pools would be short lived and would break up as soon as the conditions that created them would permit.

## APPENDIX H

### *LETTER TO THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE*

#### **Representatives of the Press**

April 29, 1991

Dear Mr. Secretary:

Please consider this letter as the first step in a process that we hope will lead to improved combat coverage and improved understanding between the military and the media over our respective functions in a democracy.

The Defense Department seems to think, as Pete Williams put it, that "the press gave the American people the best war coverage they ever had." We strongly disagree.

Our sense is that virtually all major news organizations agree that the flow of information to the public was blocked, impeded, or diminished by the policies and practices of the Department of Defense. Pools do not work. Stories and pictures were late or lost. Access to the men and women in the field was interfered with by a needless system of military escorts and copy review. These conditions meant we could not tell the public the full story of those who fought the nation's battle.

Our cooperation in Pentagon pool arrangements since the Sidle Commission has been based on an understanding that pools would provide emergency coverage of short duration. Clearly, in Desert Storm, the military establishment embraced pools as a long-term way of life. The pool system was used in the Persian Gulf War not to facilitate news coverage but to control it.

We are deeply concerned about the abridgment of our right and role to produce timely, independent reporting of Americans at war. We are apprehensive that, because this war was so successfully prosecuted on the battlefield, the virtual control that your department exercised over the American press will become a model for the future.

Our organizations are committed to the proposition that this should not be allowed to happen again. We are seeking a course to preserve the acknowledged need for real security without discarding the role of independent journalism that is also vital for our democracy.

We are intent upon not experiencing again the Desert Storm kind of pool system. In fact, there are many who believe no pool system should be agreed to in the future. We cannot accept the limitations on access or the use of monitors to chill reporting. Nor do we want a repeat of the disaster that resulted from unacceptable delays in the transmission of our stories and pictures because of security review requirements.

We have made, and will continue to make, commitments to unilateral coverage. Pentagon coverage guidelines should recognize and facilitate this open

coverage, including open access to all American troops and the ability to file expeditiously, without censorship or review.

The signers of this letter met informally at ABC News on April 15 to begin a postwar assessment. The group is not meant as a self-appointed commission to represent all media. We simply felt we had to start somewhere, with a group of manageable size.

We have problems of our own to work out and news organizations are not used to working together. Indeed, an important safeguard to press freedom is that we are so competitive. Nevertheless, we are committed to restoring our general ability to function on the battlefield and we hope that a more sensible method of operating can be achieved.

We hope within the next several weeks to arrange a meeting with you to make our points as specifically as we can, to document them and to offer workable changes.

Sincerely,

Stan Cloud, *Time*; Nicholas Horrock, *Chicago Tribune*; Howell Raines, *The New York Times*; Barbara Cohen, CBS News; Albert R. Hunt, *The Wall Street Journal*; Timothy J. Russert, NBC News; Michael Getler, *The Washington Post*; Clark Hoyt, Knight-Ridder, Inc.; Evan Thomas, *Newsweek*; Andrew Glass, *Cox Newspapers*; Charles Lewis, *Hearst Newspapers*; George Watson, ABC News; William Headline, Cable News Network; Jack Nelson, the *Los Angeles Times*; Jonathan Wolman, Associated Press.

cc: Pete Williams, Marlin Fitzwater, Gen. Colin L. Powell, Adm. Frank B. Kelso II, Gen. Merrill McPeak, Gen. Carl E. Vuono, Gen. Alfred M. Gray

*Source: Hedrick Smith, The Media and the Gulf War: The Press and Democracy in Wartime, Washington, D.C.: Seven Locks Press, 1992*

## APPENDIX I

### Operation Desert Shield Ground Rules 14 January 1991

The following information should not be reported because its publication or broadcast could jeopardize operations and endanger lives:

(1) For U.S. or coalition units, specific numerical information on troop strength, aircraft, weapons systems, on-hand equipment, or supplies (e.g. artillery, tanks, radars, missiles, trucks, water), including amounts of ammunition or fuel moved by or on hand in support and combat units. Unit size may be described in general terms such as "company-size," "multibattalion," "multidivision," "naval task force," and "carrier battle group." Number or amount of equipment and supplies may be described in general terms such as "Large," "small," or "many."

(2) Any information that reveals details of future plans, operations, or strikes, including postponed or canceled operations.

(3) Information, photography, and imagery that would reveal the specific location of military forces or show the level of security at military installations or encampments. Locations may be described as follows: all Navy embark stories can identify the ship upon which embarked as a dateline and will state that the report is coming from the "Persian Gulf," "Red Sea," or "North Arabian Sea." Stories written in Saudi Arabia may be datelined "Eastern Saudi Arabia," "Near the Kuwaiti border," etc. For specific countries outside Saudi Arabia, stories will state that the report is coming from the Persian Gulf region unless that country has acknowledged its participation.

(4) Rules of engagement details.

(5) Information on intelligence collection activities, including targets, methods, and results.

(6) During an operation, specific information on friendly force troop movements, tactical deployments, and dispositions that would jeopardize operational security or lives. This would include unit designations, names of operations, and size of friendly forces involved, until released by CENTCOM.

(7) Identification of mission aircraft points of origin, other than as land- or carrier-based.

(8) Information on the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of enemy camouflage, cover, deception, targeting, direct and indirect fire, intelligence collection, or security measures.

(9) Specific identifying information on missing or downed aircraft or ships while search and rescue operations are planned or underway.

(10) Specific operations forces' methods, unique equipment or tactics.

(11) Specific operating methods and tactics, (e.g., air angles of attack or speeds, or naval tactics and evasive maneuvers). General terms such as "low" or "fast" may be used.

(12) Information on operational or support vulnerabilities that could be used against U.S. forces, such as details of major battle damage or major personnel losses of specific U.S. or coalition units, until that information no longer provides tactical advantage to the enemy and is, therefore, released by CENTCOM. Damage and casualties may be described as "light," "moderate," or "heavy."

## **APPENDIX J**

### **Guidelines for News Media**

**14 January 1991**

News media personnel must carry and support any personal and professional gear they take with them, including protective cases for professional equipment, batteries, cables, converters, etc.

Night Operations -- Light discipline restrictions will be followed. The only approved light source is a flashlight with a red lens. No visible light source, including flash or television lights, will be used when operating with forces at night unless specifically approved by the on-scene commander.

Because of host-nation requirements, you must stay with your public affairs escort while on Saudi bases. At other U.S. tactical or field locations and encampments, a public affairs escort may be required because of security, safety, and mission requirements as determined by the host commander.

Casualty information, because of concerns of the notification of the next of kin, is extremely sensitive. By executive directive, next of kin of all military fatalities must be notified in person by a uniformed member of the appropriate service. There have been instances in which the next of kin have first learned of the death or wounding of a loved one through the news media. This problem is particularly difficult for visual media. Casualty photographs showing a recognizable face, name tag, or other identifying feature or item should not be used before the next of kin have been notified. The anguish that sudden recognition at home can cause far outweighs the news value of the photograph, film or videotape. News coverage of casualties in medical center will be in strict compliance with the Instruction of doctors and medical officials.

To the extent that individuals in the news media seek access to the U.S. area of operation, the following rule applies: Prior to or upon commencement of hostilities, media pools will be established to provide initial combat coverage of U.S. forces. U.S. news media personnel present in Saudi Arabia will be given the opportunity to join CENTCOM media pools, providing they agree to pool their products. News media personnel who are not members of the official CENTCOM media pools will not be permitted into forward areas. Reporters are strongly discouraged from attempting to link up on their own with combat units. U.S. commanders will maintain extremely tight security throughout the operational area and will exclude from the area of operation all unauthorized individuals.

For news media personnel participating in designated CENTCOM Media Pools:

(1) Upon registering with the JIB, news media should contact their respective pool coordinator for an explanation of pool operations.

(2) In the event of hostilities, pool products will be subject to review before release to determine if they contain sensitive information about military plans, capabilities, operations, or vulnerabilities (see attached ground rules) that would jeopardize the outcome of an operation or the safety of U.S. or coalition forces. Material will be examined solely for its conformance to the attached ground rules, not for its potential to express criticism or cause embarrassment. The public affairs officer on scene will review pool reports, discuss ground rule problems with the reporter, and in the limited circumstances when no agreement can be reached with a reporter about disputed materials, immediately send the disputed materials to JIB Dhahran for review by the JIB Director and the appropriate news media representative. If no agreement can be reached, the issues will be immediately forwarded to OASD(PA) for review with the appropriate bureau chief. The ultimate decision on publication will be made by the originating reporters' news organization.

(3) Correspondents may not carry a personal weapon.